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The Nation.

August 13/20, 1988 $1.25; U.K. £1

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EDITORIAL

THE PAWNS AND THE KING

"Jordan is not Palestine," said the little King, and with that swept a cherished tenet of U.S. policy into the dustbin. For years, the United States has followed Israel's lead in avoiding any dealings with the P.L.O., preferring instead the more pliant King Hussein. Indeed, support for the Israeli Labor Party's "Jordanian option" was at the core of President Reagan's 1982 peace initiative as well as Secretary of State George Shultz's recent meanderings in the region. That Palestinians rejected the representative chosen for them (a 1986 poll of West Bankers found that only 3 percent support Hussein while 93 percent support the P.L.O.) was ignored because it was an inconvenient truth.

Now the damage controllers in Washington are trying to put the best possible face on what clearly is Hussein's big slap at the United States (not, as one *New York Times* headline suggested, at the P.L.O.). How else to understand the plaintive argument of the State Department official who claimed that Hussein had put the P.L.O. on the spot? "The P.L.O. has to take charge of what is occurring in the West Bank, has to come up with aid to improve the lot of Palestinians living there, must try to speak for residents of the West Bank in world forums and must try to achieve progress in the peace process," he proclaimed. But that is an exact description of what the Palestinians in the territories are already doing.

A clear statement from the P.L.O. amplifying Yasir Arafat aide Bassam Abu Sharif's recent call for direct talks aimed at a two-state solution, with mutual recognition and security guarantees, would be most opportune now. Even more helpful would be some sign from the presidential contenders that they recognize the need for a new approach to the P.L.O. For those who were once pawns may soon be kings of their own destiny.

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Andrew Kopkind

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PRAGUE '88
Christopher Hitchens

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Philip Green

REAGAN'S COVERT CAPERS
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AN INTERNATION STORY

THE MYTH OF THE 'NARCO-GUERRILLAS'

MERRILL COLLETT

On March 10, 1984, Colombian police swooped down on a jungle drug complex known as Tranquilandia and seized 27,500 pounds of pure cocaine. It was the biggest coke bust in history. A few days later the U.S. Ambassador to Colombia, Lewis Tambs, made a startling announcement: Tranquilandia had been protected by Communist rebels. He dubbed them "narcoguerrillas."

It's now acknowledged that Tambs conjured up a phantom. There were no guerrillas at Tranquilandia. Gen. Miguel Antonio Gómez Padilla, the former head of Colombia's antinarcotics police, admitted in an interview that police did not encounter Communist rebels, their uniforms or even propaganda. "Tambs got ahead of the evidence," a senior State Department official acknowledged. Nevertheless, the narcoguerrilla was projected as reality by the Reagan Administration. A 1985 State Department and Defense Department report on Soviet influence in Latin America warned of an "alliance between drug smugglers and arms dealers in support of terrorists and guerrillas." A 1986 presidential directive raised drug smuggling to the level of a national security threat because of what Vice President George Bush called "a real link between drugs and terrorism." The next year U.S. delegates to the Conference of American Armies, meeting in Argentina, urged Latin American general staffs to unite against "narcoterrorism." Finally, in a report released this May, the London-based Institute for Strategic Studies declared that "narcoterrorism" is now "on a par with communism as a threat to western interests in Latin America."

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LETTERS.

SHOREHAM DEAL: BIG MISTAKE

Stony Brook, N.Y.

As a veteran of the long struggle to prevent the operation of the Shoreham nuclear plant and as a *Nation* reader accustomed to sophisticated editorial comment, I was surprised and disappointed by the naïve analysis of the deal to close Shoreham in your June 11 lead editorial ["As Shoreham Goes"].

It is correct to credit the sustained grassroots effort by Long Island Lighting Company ratepayers with forcing a political settlement that may, if the tentative agreement is actually consummated, prevent the potentially lethal white elephant from ever going on line. It is not correct, however, to portray the settlement negotiated by Governor Mario Cuomo's representatives as a victory over Big Government, Big Banks, Big Business, Big Media and Big Science.

The settlement terms will not only allow 5 percent annual rate increases and require Lilco's customers to pay for dismantling the plant, as you mentioned, but also provide the utility with full profit for Shoreham—just as if the plant were operating—and require Suffolk County to drop its multibillion-dollar lawsuits against Lilco for racketeering and managerial imprudence that might have substantially decreased electric rates. This is hardly a victory that will humble Lilco's financial backers, or send tremors through the nuclear industry.

You suggest that the only alternative to this settlement is Shoreham in operation. I would have expected *The Nation* to provide its readers with an analysis of the actions of our duplicitous Governor, which have forced most of Shoreham's opponents to reluctantly support this bailout deal. You make no mention of the way the Governor sabotaged the efforts of the Long Island Power Authority, created by the New York Legislature at his behest for the ostensible purpose of engineering a public takeover of Lilco. These actions included delaying the appointment of LIPA members for six months and then making appointments that included a chairman with no commitment to public power. This was followed by encouraging a subset of LIPA members to negotiate secretly with Lilco, thus delaying a decision to proceed with a takeover to the point where Cuomo could warn that time was running out and only his settlement negotiations could prevent the licensing and operation of the plant.

A financial analysis of the Cuomo settlement proposal by consultants to the Committee on Energy and the Environment of the Suffolk County Legislature has concluded that a public takeover would have been a far better outcome for Long Island's ratepayers. It is that result that could have threatened the financial interests that support nuclear power.

It is important not to confuse your readers about what kind of victory the Governor of New York can feel comfortable about endorsing.

Theodore D. Goldfarb
Executive Director
Shoreham Opponents Coalition

UNDERMINING *GLASNOST*

Zurich

Kevin Coogan and Katrina vanden Heuvel's "U.S. Funds for Soviet Dissidents," in the March 19 issue of *The Nation*, elicited a feeling of real anxiety in me—anxiety for the magazine *Glasnost*, published in the Soviet Union, and for all other independent publications like it. But my anxiety differs from that of *The Nation* in the same way that our views differ on the sending of troops into Afghanistan and the Korean Air Lines Flight 007 incident.

Indeed, it is impossible to take seriously the attempts to depict Yuri Yarim-Agaev and Vladimir Bukovsky as people who have hired themselves out to serve the interests of the U.S. government by collecting secret information on the Soviet Union. The conclusions drawn and the quotations used by the authors do not confirm the accusations brought against these people; rather, they look like an attempt to hang labels on them that were cooked up in the kitchens of Soviet propagandists. Who doesn't know that working on people's behalf requires all the information possible on the various aspects of their lives? Who, after all, doesn't know that even figures on the grain harvest or the number of road accidents are considered secret information by the Soviet authorities? And of course, it is clear to anyone who has eyes to see that in a country where Congress openly discusses the secret operations of the Central Intelligence Agency, one can easily and factually prove a connection between that agency and any organization—if such a connection really exists.

The pathetic exertions of *The Nation* would not be worth mentioning if the article I speak of did not sound a threatening warning to those who have dared to publish *Glasnost* in English. People with imagination can even understand such a warning as prophecy. Could this be an attempt to prepare public opinion for the fact that the Soviet authorities will soon take care of *Glasnost*, *Express-Khronika*, *Referendum* and similar publications, misusing the farfetched "opinion of the Western mass information media"? It is probably not for nothing that the roguish Iona Andronov displayed the mastered methods of a reconnaissance agent to Yarim-Agaev's secretary. This is what worries me, a person who feels gratitude toward anyone who translates *Glasnost*, and similar journals, into other languages and who distributes them. We ought to care with our souls for the sprouting of democracy in our homeland and truly defend it. We must realize, however, that it is the editors of these journals themselves who can give the truest evaluation of the publishers, trustees and patrons.

Anatoly Koryagin

WHO'S DUPING WHOM?

Brighton, Mass.

It is our belief that the position of authors Coogan and vanden Heuvel in their article, "U.S. Funds for Soviet Dissidents" is extremely detrimental to the human rights movement in the Soviet Union, while their assessment of the Center for Democracy in the U.S.S.R. and of its activities is biased and erroneous.

The main thesis of the article is that the activities of the center endanger Soviet dissidents because the center allegedly has something to do with intelligence-gathering. Without going into the details of their very dubious factual evidence, we assert that this thesis is false and based on a completely distorted notion of the human rights movement in the U.S.S.R. and its situation. We are authorized representatives of the Georgian Helsinki group in the West, and we declare on behalf of all human rights activists in Georgia that the work of such groups as the center not only does not put Soviet dissidents at risk but, on the contrary, protects them from K.G.B. persecution, since all publicity in the West binds the hands of Soviet executioners. It is articles like the one published in *The Nation* that make Soviet dissidents more vulnerable to K.G.B. persecution, by trying to make a gratuitous connection between the human rights activism of organizations headed by Yuri Yarim-Agaev or Vladimir Bukovsky, and some sort of espionage. Any Soviet human rights activist we have ever worked with, including Sergei Grigoryants, will unequivocally regard the article in *The Nation* as a provocation with the purpose of discrediting whatever little assistance the Soviet human rights movement gets from the West.

We fundamentally disagree with the comments of émigré and American "experts" on the human rights movement quoted in the article.

It is naïve, to say the least, to believe that the K.G.B. has any need for facts compromising undesirable individuals in order to persecute them. When it suits the needs of the K.G.B., Helsinki Watch, Amnesty International, churches and private individuals can all become "subversive anti-Soviet centers," and even *The Nation* itself might very well become one. If we follow the logic of *The Nation*, dissidents should not be helped in any way, nor should they even be mentioned, lest they be potentially "endangered." That is, in fact, the principal goal of the K.G.B., and if that goal is reached, *glasnost* will indeed expire, and not just in the Soviet Union.

A Soviet dissident is in no way responsible for any unscrupulous use of human rights

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EDITORIALS.

Stiffing the U.N.

Vice President George Bush's decision to take his presidential campaign to the U.N. Security Council on July 14 was bad symbolic politics. The next day President Reagan announced that the United States will not pay the $467 million it owes the United Nations until that organization makes further progress on budgetary reform. This undercuts the United Nations just as it has become actively engaged in resolving conflicts in the Middle East, Afghanistan, southern Africa and Indochina and is acquiring a new sense of relevance and usefulness.

The irony is that the U.S. refusal to pay up comes at a time when there are signs that the Soviet Union has rediscovered the United Nations. The Russians have agreed to pay their outstanding debts to the organization, including $197 million for peacekeeping operations. After haranguing the Soviet Union for twenty-five years to meet its obligations, the United States is now, as one Western diplomat said, "the U.N.'s number-one deadbeat."

In the past year, Mikhail Gorbachev has campaigned to strengthen the United Nations as a forum for international cooperation by expanding its peacekeeping capabilities, expanding the Secretary General's role and providing for international verification of arms control agreements. His

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suggestion that U.N. force capabilities be enhanced by reviving the Military Staff Committee is particularly timely. If the committee was in place the U.S. Navy might not be playing its difficult role in the Persian Gulf. And Gorbachev's call for Security Council members to accept compulsory jurisdiction of the World Court in certain cases contrasts sharply with the United States' unilateral snubbing of that court in 1986 in its dispute with Nicaragua.

The Reagan Administration, however, says that it must see more U.N. reforms before it will issue the certification to Congress that would trigger release of the U.S. funds owed the international organization. This legal stance may be more a matter of convenience than principle. Moscow's recent agreement to allow Soviet citizens who serve in the United Nations to take permanent assignments, in effect becoming international civil servants, was a reform long sought by the United States and other Western countries. The Reagan Administration has now accordingly shifted its criticisms to the U.N. budget. The U.S. demand that there be consensus instead of weighted voting on U.N. budgetary decisions is a device pushed by congressional conservatives to gain a U.S. veto over U.N. decisions.

Although Vernon Walters, U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, has said that "it is un-American not to pay our debts," the United States continues to cheat on its political interests and on its moral and legal obligations. This June, the twelve nations of the European Community urged the Administration to tell Congress that enough progress has been made in restructuring the United Nations to justify releasing at least $44 million in back dues. In late July, Senate Democrats signaled a turning point by pushing through a resolution calling on the United States to pay its fully assessed contribution and a proportionate share of its dues for peacekeeping forces, so that the United Nations can play an effective role in resolving regional disputes.

While Gorbachev has charted a vision of the kind of United Nations he would like to see, the Reagan Administration has refused to explain U.S. policies or priorities vis-à-vis the organization. Nor has there been any effort to test Soviet proposals or motivations. The Administration's vision of the United Nations is bankrupt in more than one sense. The tragedy is that the United States may be missing a historic opportunity to serve its own interests by revitalizing the United Nations and multilateral diplomacy.

Life After Ron?

George Bush arrives in New Orleans in the unhappy position of a politician who has kept his promises, delivered the goods and now has nothing more of substance to offer. Whether Bush actually participated to the maximum extent feasible in the major decisions of the Reagan era matters little. He collaborated with and implicitly signed on to the Reaganite package of political economy: the corporate assault on labor, the resurgence of militarism, the regressive redistribution of wealth and income, the institutionalization of racism and sexism in public policy, the exaltation of privatism and deregulated free enterprise. It looks like enough to stuff the guests at any party, but with the Republicans, too much is never enough. They want more, and Bush cannot respond.

He is constrained by the very success of Reaganism. Sixty-eight months of boom elates the class that profited most, but it has progressively alienated the more sensitive sectors of the majority for whom the tinkling of champagne glasses and the swoosh of yachts through the water have been only noises off. The elusive and unpredictable "swing voters"—the Reagan Democrats—turn out to be no mere abstractions but real people who are overwhelmed by debt, battered by persistent inflation in non-"market basket" items, distressed by deindustrialization and confused by the social disintegration the Reagan-Bush team was supposed to stop. To keep them swinging the Republican way, Bush must present a new master plan that will resolve the accumulated contradictions and keep the essence of Reaganism. He is clearly unequal to the task, morally or intellectually.

Once again, however, the Democrats are bidding to do the Republicans' job. Nothing in Dukakis's project so far suggests that he wants to readjust the relationship that Reagan established between the greedy and the needy. On the key issues of "fair taxation" (i.e., redressing the Reagan-Bush-Bentsen tax policies) and military spending, Dukakis beat back assaults from the left during the Democratic platform hearings and at the convention. Nor has he given the slightest hint that he will reverse the deregulation momentum initiated, after all, in the last Democratic Administration. At the same time, Dukakis does hold out hope that somehow (exactly how is not spelled out) the righteous grievances of Reaganism's rejects will be redressed: The homeless will be sheltered, blacks will be included, women will be given their due, children will be protected—at the same time that the rich get richer and the books are balanced.

It's clear already that the Democrats control the terms by which politics will be waged this year. Dukakis almost blew it in Atlanta, but his eleventh-hour recognition that some combination of Dukismo and Jackson Action is essential for victory in November may have already secured his election. Dukakis says that ideology is not an issue this year, but in fact the Democrats are creating a kind of new popular front ideology as a successor to Reaganism.

On the other hand, Bush's buggy is in desperate need of ideological retooling. In the last few weeks he has acknowledged the Democrats' command of the campaign by moving into their turf: with his child-care proposal, his support for a plant-closing law, his criticism of Ed Meese, his promise to put a Hispanic in the Cabinet and his courting of black voters. He is reportedly ready to pick a vice-presidential candidate who speaks to the disaffected of Reagan's America, if only the Republican right will let him have his way. The only truly Reaganite name on the short list—Jack Kemp—has been promoted not for his ultraconservatism on social issues but because he thinks he can expand the Republican Party into black and poor constituencies. New Orleans is a few hours' drive, but a long way, from Philadelphia, Mississippi, where Ronald Reagan began his campaign with quite a different message of white supremacy and class privilege eight years ago this summer.

ANDREW KOPKIND

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Where *Was* George? (cont.)

Where *was* George? The saga of Vice President George Bush's alleged involvement with the Central Intelligence Agency in 1963 grows curiouser and curiouser. In an article in *The Nation* of July 16/23 ["'George Bush,' C.I.A. Operative"], I reported the discovery of a memorandum from J. Edgar Hoover, then director of the F.B.I., saying that "Mr. George Bush of the Central Intelligence Agency" had been briefed by the Bureau on November 23, 1963, about the reaction of anti-Castro Cuban exiles in Miami to the assassination of President John F. Kennedy.

After the article appeared, the C.I.A. put out a story that the George Bush mentioned in the memorandum was not Vice President George Herbert Walker Bush; he was George William Bush, who had worked for the agency in 1963-64. Although the agency claimed that his present whereabouts were unknown, I located George William Bush. He told me he was a coast and landing-beach analyst with the agency in those years, with the rank of GS-5, but that he definitely did *not* receive the F.B.I. briefing in 1963.

As reported in my article, Vice President Bush, through spokesman Stephen Hart, denied that he was the man referred to in the memo: "I was in Houston, Texas, at the time and involved in the independent oil drilling business. And I was running for the Senate in late '63. I don't have any idea of what he's talking about." Hart added, "Must be another George Bush." When I first asked the C.I.A. about Hart's theory, it invoked its policy of neither confirming nor denying anyone's involvement with the agency.

But after the *Nation* story received wide coverage in the media, the C.I.A. evidently changed its mind. On July 19, agency spokeswoman Sharron Basso told the Associated Press that the Hoover memo "apparently" referred to George William Bush, who had worked in 1963 on the night watch at C.I.A headquarters, which "would have been the appropriate place to have received such an F.B.I. report." She said this George Bush left the C.I.A. in 1964 to work for the Defense Intelligence Agency.

Why did the agency break with its longstanding policy of "neither confirm nor deny"? Basso said it believed "the record should be clarified." Another C.I.A. official told the A.P., "We put a lot of effort into this."

In fact, the latest C.I.A. release seems less a clarification than a strategic obfuscation. Hart of the Vice President's office put out the same data to Sarah Perl of *The Nation*. Both Perl and I called the Defense Intelligence Agency, and a spokesman confirmed that George William Bush had worked there between February 1964 and July 1965, performing the same duties that he had with the C.I.A., those of a civilian-grade government intelligence research specialist, leaving with the rank of GS-7. His last known address was 401 Cambridge Road, Alexandria, Virginia. A check of old Alexandria city directories showed that a George W. Bush, "emp US govt," did live at the Cambridge Road address in 1964 and subsequent years, and that he shared the house with Chester K. Bush of the U.S. Army. Current city records show that the deed to the house is in the names of Colonel Bush and his wife, Alice, and that a George William Bush at that address paid his automobile decal fee to the city this February.

I called Colonel Bush, who said he was George William Bush's father. He confirmed that his son had worked for the C.I.A. and still lived at the house, but said he could not come to the phone because he was ill; he asked me to call back the following evening. When I did, I spoke to George William Bush, who is 49 and works as a claims representative for the Social Security Administration. He said he had worked for the C.I.A. for about six months in 1963-64. When I read him the Hoover memo about the F.B.I. briefing, his response was, "Is that the other George Bush?"

While in the C.I.A. he had never received interagency briefings because he was "just a lowly researcher and analyst" and worked only with documents and photographs. He said he "knew neither one" of two people the memorandum mentions as also being briefed, William T. Forsyth of the F.B.I. and Capt. William Edwards of the D.I.A. "So it wasn't me," he said.

Bush said he left the C.I.A. because he was offered a job by the D.I.A. at a higher grade and salary. He said he stayed at the D.I.A. until he joined the Social Security Administration in January 1968. He professed he was "a little bit amazed, but not entirely surprised" that the C.I.A. and the D.I.A. had divulged his employment with them. "I didn't know they were at liberty to release all this," he said. "It was certainly without advance notice." Bush said he had not known of the story in *The Nation* about Vice President Bush's alleged 1963 ties with the C.I.A.

There was a minor discrepancy in this George Bush's account of his background: Although he told me that he went directly from the D.I.A. to the Social Security Administration in 1968, the 1967 Alexandria directory lists his occupation as a city social worker. When I inquired about this job, Bush said he had held it for "about a year" before going to work for the Social Security Administration. City personnel records show that he joined the Alexandria Department of Public Welfare as a social worker trainee on August 2, 1965, rose to the rank of social worker on August 10, 1966, and left on January 12, 1968.

The Social Security Administration confirmed that Bush is currently employed in its Arlington, Virginia, office, and other points in Bush's story also checked out. He told me that before he joined the C.I.A. he had been living in Honolulu, where his father was stationed in the Army; that he had attended the University of Hawaii; and that he had worked for the Honolulu Department of Social Services and Housing. The Honolulu city directory for 1962-63 lists Chester K. Bush, "emp USARPAC," as residing at 1172 Koloa Street, and City of Honolulu personnel records confirm that George William Bush lived at that address while working as a trainee social worker for several months in 1963. The registrar's office of the University of Hawaii confirmed that he attended classes there from the fall of 1959

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through the summer of 1961, graduating with a B.A. in history on September 1, 1961. The age he gave me checked out as well: According to school records, he was born on May 18, 1939, in White Plains, New York.

In the Alice in Wonderland world of intelligence there is always the possibility that people are not who they say they are. And there is that discrepancy about his job as a social worker, for which there could be a perfectly innocent explanation. At my request, Victor Navasky, editor of *The Nation*, called Bush again and had him repeat his story about his work with the C.I.A. in 1963-64 and his statement that he was not the man of the F.B.I. memorandum.

Why did the C.I.A. indicate that George William was the Bush in question without attempting to locate him first? Why did the media report the agency's version without checking further? And where *was* Vice President George Herbert Walker Bush on November 23, 1963? If he was working for the C.I.A. then, why hasn't he told us?

JOSEPH MCBRIDE

Joseph McBride's research has been supported by the Fund for Investigative Journalism and Essential Information. He is grateful for the assistance of Ruth O'Hara and Timothy D. McBride.

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CALVIN TRILLIN

When I heard that there were four press people for every delegate at the Democratic National Convention, I figured that what each delegate must have had to worry about was which four he got. As much as I hate to say anything that could be taken as even faintly critical of my comrades in the press, there's no point in trying to deny that some of them can be a trial late in the evening.

"What they assigned me was four turkeys," I can imagine a Democratic delegate named Pete telling his pals when he returned from Atlanta. "Gobble, gobble, gobble, gobble."

"I didn't know they split the reporters up that way," Pete's cousin Cy says. "I thought the point was for all 16,000 of them to interview Jesse Jackson at once and see how close they could come to writing exactly the same story."

Cy's interest in the subject is more than idle curiosity: He was chosen to be a delegate to the Republican National Convention in New Orleans, and it occurs to him that having four reporters hanging around might crimp his style on some of the Bourbon Street forays he had been looking forward to. Cy can be a trial late in the evening himself.

"No, it was right there in the newspaper I read on the plane going over to Atlanta: four reporters to each delegate," Pete says. "When I found that out, I asked for David Brinkley. I've always wanted to meet David Brinkley. I like that deliberate way of talking he has, pausing after every word or two. I always wondered whether he'd order a beer that way. So I told them that if they gave me David Brinkley, I'd be willing to take one of those gorillas who yell at each other on *The McLaughlin Group*."

"So what was Brinkley really like?" Cy said. "Did you ask him what Cronkite is really like? What I'd like to ask Cronkite is what Dan Rather is really like."

"I don't know what any of them are really like," Pete replies. "The press office people said Brinkley was already taken. He'd been taken for ages. Apparently, if you want anybody as well known as Brinkley, you've got to get in your order months ahead of time. Maybe years. They tell me that it's even worse with the Republicans: Apparently there's some delegate from Orange County, California, who reserves William F. Buckley Jr. from convention to convention."

Cy is not happy to hear that. He's about to leave for New Orleans, and he hadn't even known about putting in your press people order. He sees himself being assigned three hard-shell Baptists from the convention team of the Religious Broadcast Service, plus a teetotaler from *The Christian Science Monitor*.

"Sid Brightsen got a break," Pete says. "All four of his press people were from a Japanese television crew, and they basically didn't speak English. Sid just invited them to his hotel room at 10 every morning and said very slowly, 'Party unity. Win in November.' They'd smile and go away, and Sid would have the rest of the day to himself."

Cy hadn't even considered the possibility of foreign reporters. He envisions himself followed around by four solemn-looking men from Saudi Arabia who wear flowing robes and shake their heads sadly every time he reaches for a beer. "I knew that San Francisco in 1984 was my last chance for a real convention," he says.

That was a Democratic rather than a Republican convention in San Francisco, of course, and Cy has always been a Republican. But he had been eager to check out some clubs in North Beach, so Pete had agreed to switch conventions with him if they were chosen delegates. They figured that, since nothing has been decided by delegates at a national political convention since about 1956, it wouldn't make much difference who went to which one.

"My turkeys could speak English, and they never stopped," Pete says. "Griping about their editors, bragging about the fancy hotels they'd stayed in. This was all while they were supposedly interviewing me. I kept saying, 'Don't you want to know whether I'm more liberal now than I was in 1984? Don't you want to know whether I think Michael Dukakis meant to snub Jesse Jackson when he didn't tell him about Lloyd Bentsen in advance? Don't you want to know about my demographics? I've got some dandy demographics here. I got demographics that'll knock your socks off!' They'd just order another round and talk about old times in Saigon."

Cy is thinking, "These guys sound like my sort of guys."

"I don't know what you're going to do about this in New Orleans," Pete says.

Cy knows. He's going to ask for David Brinkley, and hope for the worst.

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Strategy Session

EDWARD SOREL

LET'S FACE IT, HE'LL LOSE NO MATTER WHAT WE PUT INTO HIS SPEECH.
COOL IT, HERE HE COMES
YOU CAN'T WRITE FIREWORKS FOR A GUY WHO SOUNDS LIKE A PRISSY SCHOOLMARM
HI FELLAS... HOW'S THE SPEECH GOIN'?
GREAT, GEORGE, JUST GREAT
OOOOOOW! THAT VOICE!!
BUT WE DO HAVE TO FACE THE FACT THAT THE CHARGES DUKAKIS HAS MADE ARE SERIOUS
HE'S HINTED YOU GOT MONEY FOR THE CONTRAS FROM THE COLOMBIAN COCAINE CARTEL...
...AND DEMANDING TO KNOW WHAT DEAL YOU HAD WITH NORIEGA
...AND DEMANDING YOU COME CLEAN ON THE IRANIAN ARMS DEAL
I KNOW
I KNOW
ABOUT THE ONLY THING HE HASN'T DEMANDED IS THAT YOU BE THROWN IN THE SLAMMER
Y'SEE? THAT'S WHAT I'VE BEEN SAYING ALL ALONG! DUKAKIS IS SOFT ON CRIME!!
Edward Sorel

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BEAT THE DEVIL.

Oh What a Lovely War

Despite ritual expressions of relief at the possibility of an end to the war between Iraq and Iran, most Americans have enjoyed the eight-year conflict pitting wog against wog and resulting in the elimination of satisfactorily huge numbers on both sides. Ted Koppel caught this attitude exactly when he remarked on his program of February 25, 1987, to the contenders' ambassadors, "If it weren't such a tragic situation in which so many people were dying, I'm sure that both of you could see that there's a certain element of humor here. I mean, you are both accusing the United States of assisting the other side."

Such snickering would be understandable, at least from the arms merchants. Joe Stork, editor of *Middle East Report*, reckons such sales add up to $16 billion worth to Iraq and $9 billion worth to Iran. Suppliers, mostly impartial in the destination of their wares, have included the United States, the Soviet Union, China, France, Italy, East Germany, Switzerland, North Korea and Brazil. Libya joined Israel, Syria and Argentina in fortifying Iran, while Iraq was bolstered by Jordan, Egypt, Poland, Czechoslovakia and Chile, which sent cluster bombs. Since 1983, when Iran began to gain advantage in the war, the United States has mostly fortified Iraq, and has additionally seen it become the largest recipient of U.S.-subsidized grain sales—now worth about $1 billion a year.

The yield on this arms commerce has been 1 million dead, 1.7 million wounded, 1.5 million refugees—an aspect of the struggle scanted by *The New York Times*, which announced in an editorial on September 2, 1987, "The central issue is that Iran's revolution threatens moderate Arab regimes, the West's oil and stability throughout the region."

As the tilt of this disgusting sentence suggests, the prevailing view in the United States has been that Iran is the villain of the story. *The Times* has talked of "Iran's war against Iraq" and the Ayatollah's "Holy War," even though Iraq invaded Iran in 1980. Iraq and its leader, Saddam Hussein, have enjoyed relatively genteel treatment from the Western press as being somehow more decent than the fundamentalist fanatics. Given the barbarity exercised by both regimes against their people, Iraq is probably the worse, a methodically totalitarian society. Amnesty International's 1987 report on Iraq talked about the "disappearance" of about 300 Kurdish children arrested in Sulaimaniya between late September and mid-October 1985. It also called for "an investigation into reports that some of the children had been tortured."

Amnesty International has also learned of hundreds executed in Iraq in 1986, many of them army deserters, members of banned political parties and students put to death summarily and without trial. On November 4, 1987, the Iraqi penal code was amended to prescribe the death penalty for publicly insulting the President of the Republic, the Ba'ath Party or the government. Even Iraq's use of mustard and cyanide gas did not reduce it to pariah status, though perhaps gas warfare no longer carries the opprobrium it once did, ever since the Israeli government started killing Palestinians in this fashion during the *intifada*.

In this moral twilight the American left has let the largest U.S. military deployment since Vietnam—in the Persian Gulf—pass without serious challenge.

The Cocktail Stories

There are certain faces that, biographically speaking, you can use to take a time check, just to help figure out where you are on life's journey. It's like seeing Kurt Vonnegut and knowing you must be at a book party in New York, or, earlier in the century, the reporter Knickerbocker and knowing that somewhere near at hand crisis impended. "What, you here already, Herr Knickerbocker?" a Budapest hotelier once exclaimed as he espied the American, notebook in hand. "Are things already then so bad?"

I find that Tom Hayden serves as a pretty useful time check in this way. Middle age starts squeezing through the door and here's Tom squeezing right after it, volume of memoirs in hand. What, you here, Herr Tom? Are we already then so old?

Reunion is mostly middle-aged and dolefully bourgeois in tone, as one might expect from an ambitious California state assemblyperson engaged in an apology *pro vita sua*. Here's how the year 1966 is ushered in: "The early spirit of pragmatism and experimentation was steadily replaced by the adoption of more radical, abstract, and ultimately paralyzing ideology. Instead of Camus, there came Sartre, Fanon, and then Herbert Marcuse, whose *One Dimensional Man* [*sic*] suggested that the system could not only absorb and muffle voices of reform but even exploit them to create the illusion of democratic possibilities."

Hayden even tells the story of the momentous Molotov cocktail cover like a policeman reciting evidence in court. On the cover of its issue of August 24, 1967, *The New York Review of Books* ran a drawing of a Molotov cocktail, outlining the ingredients necessary for its preparation. For years afterward—long past the point, sometime in the mid-1970s, when *The New York Review* had become about as radical as the Century Club—neoconservatives would gesture back to this cover as the defining moment in the downward slide of the liberal section of the New York intelligentsia. Sometimes I think much of Bob Silvers's career as one of the magazine's editors has been a flight from that illustration and its Jacobin associations. Hayden writes:

> I had been fascinated by the simplicity and power of the Molotov cocktail during those days in Newark [where huge riots were going on]. There could be no military defense against such an easily constructed missile. Nor were its possibilities for asserting a systematically denied manhood [this is a reference to the thought of Frantz Fanon, whose ideas Hayden has just been discussing] lost on me. I provided a napkin drawing of such a missile to writer Andrew Kopkind, whose editors at the New York Review of Books, apparently sensing the potent appeal even to their intellectual audience, printed a David Levine version on their cover a month after the upheaval. . . . In an article for the New York Review, I informed my readership that "the role of

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ALEXANDER COCKBURN

> organized violence is now being carefully considered" by a new breed of black activists. . . . The New York Review article caused an intellectual stir, marking the first time that a legitimate and established journal lent its imprimatur to such incendiary speculation.

Out of curiosity and with the help of Ken Silverstein, I checked the memories of others involved in this chapter in New York intellectual life.

Andrew Kopkind has somewhat the same recollection, though more detailed and rooted in circumstance. He'd been working on an article for *The New York Review* on Martin Luther King's growing irrelevance to the black struggle, which was becoming increasingly nationalistic and violent. He arrived in Newark to find the place in a state of virtual siege, met Hayden, then preparing an article for the same issue of the magazine, and retired with him to a seedy inner-city bar to talk. They dwelled for a while on Molotov cocktails, which were to those riots what stones have been to the West Bank *intifada*, and Kopkind asked how they went off.

Hayden drew his cocktail napkin sketch and Kopkind returned to New York and showed it to Silvers, saying, "This would be a great cover"; to which Silvers replied, "It's wonderful, it's wonderful." Later, Kopkind recalls, Silvers told him that he had given the sketch to David Levine to flesh out and Levine refused on the ground that it was too violent. So the drawing went to Lemuel Line. Kopkind well remembers the stir, for reasons including the fact that the notorious cover bore the date of his thirty-second birthday, and also that much of the uproar stemmed from a line in his piece: "Morality, like politics, starts at the barrel of a gun." That statement, along with the cover, Kopkind says now, "became the target of all the hostility toward the issue and was the nub of the whole problem for liberals."

Both Raymond Shapiro and Jeanne Strouse, who were respectively *The Review*'s office manager and Silvers's assistant at the time, think that there was no particular element of moral choice in Levine's not having done the drawing, since caricatures are his specialty.

With Silvers himself we get more of a *Rashomon*-like divergence from other accounts. As he remembers, "Hayden himself turned up with it. I have a distinct memory of it. I do remember Tom with that drawing." He disagrees with Hayden's remark in *Reunion* that the editors judged it to have a "potent appeal." "We thought it was a drawing that was emblematic of what was happening. We certainly didn't think it had a potent appeal." He also remembered that Line had done the drawing but maintained that Levine had not been asked, saying "absolutely not" when asked if Levine had refused to do it. "We simply thought Line should be the one. Levine's style was not suitable." Later, after talking to *The Review*'s co-editor, Barbara Epstein, Silvers said maybe Kopkind did bring it by, but they both recalled going over the sketch with Hayden.

Levine said he "refused because I thought it was an irresponsible thing to put on the cover. It was the only time I ever thought the *Review* people did anything that could be construed as irresponsible. I just couldn't go along with it." Levine says he believed that "even the drawing of a bomb" could potentially lead to violence. Later Silvers called back from *The Review*'s offices to say that he had Levine at his side, who wanted to make it clear that he had not conveyed his moral and political qualms to the editors at the time.

The Singing Judge

A friend of mine recently passed the weekend at the plush but very tacky Greenbrier in West Virginia, attending a conference of Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals judges, who hold the scales in Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia and the Carolinas. The highlight of the occasion was a singalong, led by Chief Justice William Rehnquist. Every care was taken to make this event a success, including the distribution of a songsheet, labeled "Old-Favorites With the Chief Justice" and featuring "I Been Working on the Railroad," with words carefully spelled to denote the pronunciation required of the caroling jurists. For example:

> Oh, I was bo'n in Mobile town, I'm wukkin' on de levee.
> All day I roll de cotton down, A wukkin' on de levee.
>
> I been wukkin' on de railroad all de live-long day,
> I been wukkin' on de railroad to pass de time away.
> Doan' yo' hyar de whistle blow'in'
> Rise up so early in de mawn.
> Doan' yo' hyar de Cap'n shoutin',
> Dinah, blow yo' hawn
>
> I use' to have a dog name' Bill, A wukkin' on de levee.
> He run away, but I'm here still, A wukkin' on de levee.

The performance was judged to have been a great success, with "Wukkin'" led energetically by the nation's chief defender of civil rights and enfranchisement for minority citizens. Given that he presided over this offensive enterprise it came as no shock to participants in a seminar that weekend on the High Court's recent decisions to learn from Geoffrey Stone, a dean at the University of Chicago's law school, that on twenty-two of twenty-four rulings on freedom of expression and criminal procedures, involving the First, Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Amendments, Rehnquist upheld the action of the government.

As one might imagine, few of the celebrants saw anything odd about the content of the singalong, but that is what could be expected of a collection of Federal judges who ruled, in *J.A. Croson v. City of Richmond*, that a 30 percent minority set-aside program for contractors doing business with the city constituted an unnecessary distinction based on race; who ruled, in *Shaare Tefila Congregation v. Cobb*, that desecration of a synagogue by neo-Nazis did not constitute a violation of the worshipers' civil rights; and who held that Jerry Falwell could indeed recover damages from Larry Flynt.

Incidentally, it's not even clear that "Working on the Railroad" can be traced to black or slave roots. According to Denes Agay's *Best Loved Songs of the American People*, some say the song is an old Louisiana levee song of "negro lore" but others trace it to Irish roots, as an old hymn adapted and sung by Irish work gangs.

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MINORITY REPORT.

Prague

For twenty years Czechoslovakia has been the site of a planned stultification of society known as "normalization." This has been an almost fascinating exercise in the depoliticization of life and thought, and the reduction of ideology to one dimension. It does not even possess the ironies and ambiguities of the initial Communist seizure of power in 1948, when, as even a committed foe like Milan Kundera recalls in *The Book of Laughter and Forgetting*:

> I took other Communist students by the hand, I put my arms around their shoulders, and we took two steps in place, one step forward, lifted first one leg and then the other, and we did it just about every month, there being always something to celebrate, an anniversary here, a special event there, old wrongs were righted, new wrongs perpetrated, factories were nationalized, thousands of people went to jail, medical care became free of charge, small shopkeepers lost their jobs, aged workers took their first vacations ever in confiscated country houses, and we smiled the smile of happiness.

Indeed, Kundera rather generously grants that in 1948 the Communist Party "took power not in bloodshed and violence, but to the cheers of about half the population. And please note: the half that cheered was the more dynamic, the more intelligent, the better half."

Nothing of this sort could be said about normalization. It has been an application of crass utilitarianism in the service of unsanctioned power. Its chief features have been the rewarding of obedience, no matter how conservative, and the punishment of opposition, no matter how idealistic. Imagine a "Scoundrel Time" that went on for twenty years, inaugurated by a postinvasion questionnaire from "Education Minister" Jaromir Hrbek that asked all party members, about their friends and colleagues: "Which are honest and capable? (Name at least ten.) Which have been discredited by antisocialist and anti-Soviet deeds and attitudes?" By the time this inquisition was over, half a million Czechs and Slovaks had been purged from the Communist Party, and an enormous percentage of the nation's intelligentsia had been forced to live abroad.

Here, a word to certain anti-anti-Communists. The authorities in Prague claim the support of the "ordinary people" against the pampered dissidents and elite scribblers who are so celebrated in the Western press. They take a special, sniggering pleasure in punishing troublesome academics, for example, by demoting them to such jobs as truck driver, stoker and janitor. Certainly this shows a fierce contempt for intellectual labor, but does it not demonstrate a revealing contempt for manual labor as well? As Milan Simecka, a leading opposition essayist, puts it in his book *The Restoration of Order* (New Left Books, 1984):

> However adaptable socialist ideology may be, it would be hard for it to justify with any credibility the fact that the socialist state behaves like a red-in-tooth-and-claw capitalist of the last century, that it establishes blacklists, and fires employees suspected of involvement in "strikes", not to mention those who might be a source of trouble, or those who fail to show the right degree of respect to the management, and so on. You do not need ideological reasons to be disgusted by such practices; the good old socialist gut-reaction we inherited from earlier generations tells us they are wrong.

Upon approaching Prague's Old Town Square, there is no avoiding a confrontation with the statue of Jan Hus. In all of Czechoslovak discussion, this Protestant martyr who died rather than recant is contrasted with the Good Soldier Schweik, who made dumb obedience into a form of passive dissent. Citizens debating this contrast in the national character tend to reason defensively, and to say that long-term organized resistance is made impossible by the country's geographic position. This is as much as to say that it is a victim of the cold war. In his memoir *Night Frost*, Zdenek Mlynar, Communist Party Secretary in 1968, touched deftly on this point. The country's leadership, taken hostage by the Red Army, was being hectored by Brezhnev thus:

> I asked President Johnson if the American government still fully recognized the results of the Yalta and Potsdam conferences. And on August 18 I received the reply: as far as Czechoslovakia and Rumania are concerned, it recognizes them without reservation. . . . So what do you think will be done on your behalf?

The old "spheres of influence" argument, put at the time of the heaviest U.S. bombardment of Vietnam, has never been underscored to better effect. Nevertheless there were those who preferred Hus to Schweik even then. The Czechoslovaks have never forgotten Dr. Frantisek Kriegel, who alone among members of Alexander Dubcek's government refused to sign the Moscow Protocol legitimizing the invasion ex post facto and who maintained this refusal despite solitary confinement and threats to his life. As a veteran of the Spanish Civil War, a doctor in the Chinese Revolution and a militant in the anti-Nazi resistance, he had not acquired the requisite habits of obedience. When he died a few years later, the secret police seized his body to prevent funeral demonstrations and circulated the basest anti-Jewish libels against his memory.

It was made clear even at the time that the invasion of Czechoslovakia was a hinge event for Communism. "Panzerkommunismus" was the term used by Ernst Fischer, leader of the Austrian Communists through the bleakest years of the cold war and a man who had broadcast in German on Moscow Radio throughout the battle of Stalingrad. Ultimately, "Eurocommunism" may be only an episode in the historic eclipse of the Western Communist culture, but it can be said with certainty that this eclipse was hastened by the Prague events.

Developments in the East were less easy to monitor but in the long run no less impressive. A Polish ship worker named Edmund Baluka once told me that he had been dispatched with his army unit to Czechoslovakia and told that a West

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CHRISTOPHER HITCHENS

German revanchist attack was under way. He and his mates were more than disgusted to discover the crude lie, and two years later he was a prominent figure in a strike in the Gdansk shipyard which is, in essence, still going on. Somewhere in East Germany, a party official named Rudolf Bahro decided to leave the party while remaining an ostensible member, and to begin work on a book, *The Alternative in Eastern Europe*. It has become more and more pertinent to ask how many unknown Bahros there are. In his memoirs Zdenek Mlynar did not mention a fellow student he had known in Moscow in the 1950s—a courageous exception to the conformist standard demanded by the late Stalin period—who had seemed impatient with the general stupidity and chauvinism that infected the atmosphere. Only two years ago did Mlynar, now in exile, read the papers and notice photographs of his old school friend, Mikhail Sergeyevitch Gorbachev.

It is at least thinkable that we may have here an example of what Hegel liked to call "the cunning of history." Over the past two decades, Western commentary on Soviet Europe has been inclined to favor a certain ruthless pessimism, generally voiced by experienced ex-Communist émigrés. This tendency has spoken of a "totalitarian" model of society, reinforced by Asiatic despotism, that is axiomatically beyond reform. Its style, whether in the elegiac later novels of Milan Kundera or the bitter essays of Leszek Kolakowski, has been oddly resigned to the permanence of the Stalinist system, distinctly pitying toward those who entertained hopes of change, and therefore rather indulgent toward Western "statesmanship" of the Reagan variety. Eastern historians and essayists like Bahro, Simecka and Roy Medvedev have been left out of this account, with the consequence that the whole Gorbachev phenomenon has come to Western audiences as a more or less complete surprise, later claimed rather too hastily and opportunistically as a reward for "Peace Through Strength."

There is an intelligible case for saying that much of this was fatalistic mirror-Stalinism, which paradoxically believed that the Communist system was stronger and more self-confident than it actually was. Take, first, Simecka's reply to Kundera on the question of "Central Europe." This essay, written in 1948, was as far as I know published only in the *Eastern European Reporter* of Summer 1985. It refers directly to Kundera's celebrated essay "The Tragedy of Central Europe," in *The New York Review of Books* of April 26, 1984, which had discussed the possibility that the very identity of the Warsaw Pact nations might be obliterated by Russification. As Simecka says, blaming "Russia" for threatening to extirpate Eastern Europe's identity is unhelpful and ahistorical. For one thing, the nations there have not had their national existence destroyed despite the cultural desolation imposed upon them. For another, use of the term "Russia" is clearly ideological:

> Most seriously, it involuntarily ignores the existence of all the other nations of the Soviet Union and tempts one to perceive Estonians and Armenians in terms of Pushkin and Dostoyevsky.

The consequences of this *MittelEuropa* self-pity are more than just literary. Simecka goes on to say:

> We should not disguise the fact that it was not Russia which ushered in the beginning of the end of the Central European tradition. It was Hitler who tore up by the roots that certain decency of political and cultural standards which the Central European nations managed to preserve more or less intact up to 1937. It was chiefly due to the insane acts of the Nazis that the nations of Central Europe became the victims and outsiders of history. It was Nazism, after all, which had so effectively silenced the "Jewish genius" which had been part and parcel of Central Europe's spiritual evolution. At the moment the tragedy of Central Europe began to unfold, Eastern influences were negligible or, at any rate, the Russian factor played scarcely any role.

Kundera, and his admirers and emulators, seem to need the anti-Russian theme just as they need the "totalitarian" one. Totalitarianism, as our home-grown theorists never weary of pointing out, is distinguished from authoritarianism by the state's need to conscript not just passivity but assent and even enthusiasm; by its determination to abolish the private life. Yet the private life, as Simecka explains in *The Restoration of Order*, is precisely what the Czechoslovak authorities encourage people to cultivate:

> The State allows adapted citizens to do what they like with the money they more or less honestly acquire. They may build houses, chalets and cabins, and fit them out as they wish. They may buy cars and travel in them where they will. . . . They may travel abroad, so long as they can afford the shocking tax on the purchase of hard currency. . . . They may not actually be able to read what they would like, but the State erects communal aerials to receive TV programs from Vienna.

In "normal" conditions, this exploitation of materialism works reasonably well, allowing the regime to pick off troublemakers one by one or in small groups, without ever succeeding in crushing them absolutely. But how can the rulers be sure of normality? Nobody predicted that the two hot issues in Czech society would suddenly become military conscription and environmental destruction, recruiting new sections of the population into semi-opposition. In both cases intelligent citizens are asked to ignore, or even to disbelieve, the evidence of their own eyes.

This latter contradiction is at the core of Bahro's masterly book *The Alternative*. He began his detailed and practical critique by saying that "snooping about Dostoyevsky-style in the moral atmosphere of the dictatorship" was all very well but did not help in understanding what made it work, or what might break it down. He proposed the daring idea of "surplus consciousness": the realization that state socialist bureaucracy has created a class of technically skilled people while requiring them to act without initiative. These people, in a historic sense, *know too much*. And this could

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be as true of the theater director as of the supervisor in a power plant. Here is how Bahro, in response to the events of 1968, described the contradictions of surplus consciousness in the Soviet Union:

> In the Soviet Union the contradiction between the apparatus and the surplus consciousness is particularly deep, since the polit-bureaucracy there is less cultivated and adaptable, as a result of the backward semi-Asiatic mentality it inherited, and less susceptible to assimilating the new social forces in compromises of various kinds and degrees. Soviet statistics claim that three-fifths of those working in industry now have either college or full secondary education. But the skilled elements are politically kept under tutelage in the same paternalist manner as the meanest *kolkhoz* peasant, who might still be living under the Tsars. Even those most qualified are treated in this respect as subordinate specialists, as cogs in the gigantic clockwork of the state economy.

In Marxist terms, Bahro has identified a conflict between the forces and relations of production, a conflict that extends deep into the superstructure. During a seminar in 1979, I heard the late Raymond Williams describe Bahro's work as "a long look ahead." Perhaps he was too sanguine. The remainder of the chapter quoted from above now reads like a script for the post-Chernenko events in Moscow. Gorbachev is clearly risking everything on a mobilization of surplus consciousness. He has decided to break with a past that is part Asiatic-Russian and part Stalinist, and to cease to insult the intelligence.

It is, as Confucians would have it, too early to say whether we can trust reformism from above. The Czechoslovaks in 1948 and 1968 found that what can be given can also be taken away. But there has to come a point when surplus consciousness takes on a life of its own. If it was to do so, it would drastically revise the assumptions upon which all theories of "communism" are currently based. The system is sterile; therefore it cannot reproduce itself. It wanted to emulate and overtake capitalism, but could not put its trust in innovation. In its struggle with the cult of growth, with the burden of militarism and with the horrors of nuclearism, to say nothing of the accounting with history, it may yet show "Russia" to be more European than we think.

That is all in the future. At any moment, though, the Moscow press may print a searching revisionist article about the "fraternal intervention" in Prague twenty years ago. Certainly, the process of reform will not be demonstrably under way until it does. The example of Czechoslovakia has turned out to be an extraordinary one, both morally and practically. As Brecht put it in his poem on Czechoslovak history, "On the bed of the Moldau, stones are rolling . . . "

In the long run, Hus and Schweik made a historic compromise, with results that are neither laughable nor forgotten.

LETTERS.

(*Continued From Page 114*)

data in the United States, and only the criminally warped thinking of Soviet totalitarians can see it otherwise. But the writers of the article in *The Nation* apparently share the views of the latter.

The magazine's crude rhetoric about Gorbachev's policies and some sort of "socialist pluralism" in the U.S.S.R. has nothing to do with the changes now taking place there. Like most Soviet dissidents, we completely share Bukovsky's view that "now is the time not to weaken but on the contrary to increase pressure" on the Russians. The Soviet system has always been and remains a totalitarian tyranny that denies the rights of individuals and nations and strives for global expansion. The attempts of Western left-wing circles to restore the health and strength of the sick beast are a criminal betrayal of the ideals of freedom, democracy and humanism. If *The Nation* cares so much about the survival of *Glasnost* magazine, it ought to advertise this publication instead of, for all intents and purposes, undermining it. The center carries on the noble task of translating *Glasnost* into English and distributing it in the West, and we strongly protest the clumsy attacks on it.

As for the U.S. funds mentioned in the title of the article, perhaps it would be better to ask how many dollars of U.S. government funds go to programs that play up to totalitarianism in its propaganda offensive to achieve moral parity with the West. *Tengiz Gudava*
Eduard Gudava

COOGAN AND VANDEN HEUVEL REPLY

New York City

One of the great benefits of a democratic system is the existence of a free press able to report on events, including abuses of power and misuses of public funds, from a diversity of viewpoints and regardless of whom it may or may not serve politically. There is a wide range of views within the Soviet émigré community in the West, and among Western observers, about the significance of developments in the Soviet Union under Mikhail Gorbachev and about the best way to promote the cause of human rights there. The difference between the opinions expressed in these letters and the conclusions we reached in our article exemplifies this. Anatoly Koryagin is, of course, entitled to his opinion about how best to bring democracy to the country that so persecuted him. But we must take issue with his implied contention that Western journalists should publish only stories that conform to his conception of how to promote democracy in the Soviet Union.

Did the Center for Democracy use any of the funds it received from the National Endowment for Democracy to exploit Soviet dissidents as links in an "informational network," as proposed in a document drafted by the center's current head, Yuri Yarim-Agaev, in March 1984? Our article presented evidence suggesting that it did so, which led us to two conclusions: that such activities were a misuse of U.S. government funds, and that such activities potentially endangered Soviet dissidents and threatened to discredit their rightful claim to represent an independent democratic movement in the Soviet Union. The Gudavas rail against our conclusion that the activities of the Center for Democracy potentially endanger the cause of human rights in the Soviet Union, but that concern is expressed in our article by other members of the Russian émigré community, and from our research we consider them to have good cause for concern.

The Gudavas adhere to the view, shared with Vladimir Bukovsky, that Gorbachev and *perestroika* represent nothing significantly new and that the Western response should be to increase cold war pressure on the Soviet Union. This is not our opinion nor the opinion of many well-informed people in the West, of Andrei Sakharov or, as is now clear, even of President Reagan. *Kevin Coogan*
Katrina vanden Heuvel

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ARTICLES.

THE GUNMAN IN THE GULF

Who Really Shot Down Flight 655?

PHILIP GREEN

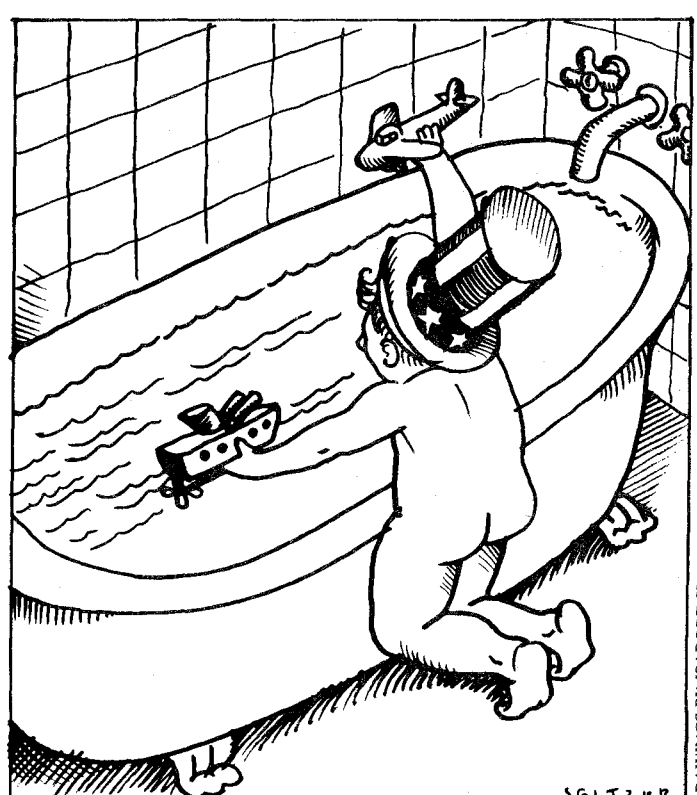
Five hundred years after Machiavelli first explained to Lorenzo the Magnificent how a prince should maintain his rule, most of us recognize that states will not behave as if they were morally responsible individuals. That does not mean, though, that our leaders, let alone ourselves, ought to forget the fundamental rules of moral responsibility—even if we are so busy policing the world that there isn't much time left over for reflection. But public response to the downing of Iran Air Flight 655 and, even worse, the response (if it can be dignified with that description) of the President and Vice President leads one to wonder whether a grasp of simple morality is widespread among Americans today.

We do not yet know what happened on the flight path of the Iranian Airbus. Already, though, the unraveling of the Pentagon's initial cover story (see, for example, Alexander Cockburn in *In These Times*, July 20-August 2, and note reports that an investigation panel attributed the shootdown to crew panic) indicates that what we have been and will be told bears nothing like a one-to-one correspondence with what a disinterested observer might call the truth. But to engage in moral discourse, no further evidence is necessary; what is already available to us speaks for itself.

Thus, let us assume that at least from his own immediate, ground-level perspective, Comdr. Will Rogers really did make what the President calls a "tragic" but militarily defensible "mistake." It is the case, then, that Commander Rogers himself did not behave immorally, that he is not a war criminal, perhaps even (though this is much more questionable) that he should not be relieved of duty for presiding over a command error. However, the fact that we can explain how a mistake came to be made does not mean that its outcome is morally acceptable. The question that we should all be asking is not, Did Commander Rogers act in justifiable self-defense in shooting down a civilian airliner? Rather, as moral beings, we all, including the President, should be asking what the complaisant media have been neglecting to ask: Is it all right that 290 civilians were killed by American military forces? The answer is, of course, that it is not all right; it is morally wrong; it is a crime for which responsibility must be taken and compensation made. Some of our legislators seem to be agreed about the necessity of making reparations; not one of them has had the temerity to demand that the persons who have responsibility for the deployment and use of our military power assume the burden of that responsibility.

How can it be that the outcome of a tragic mistake should be morally condemned? The answer is that our *intentions* do not excuse our actions; they merely explain our lives before whatever higher tribunal will finally judge us. There are some "mistakes" we don't have a right to make, or, more correctly, we don't have a right to put ourselves in such a position that we are likely to make them. If we behave honorably and with reasonable foresight, we then have a right to say, if some unforeseen eventuality pulls the rug out from under us, that we did the best we could and should be forgiven the consequences. But if we behave dishonorably or without reasonable foresight, our "good intentions" become nothing but a bad excuse for our crimes—which are no longer just mistakes.

Both common and statutory law have always insisted on that distinction (at least with respect to foresight; honor does not usually enter into jurisprudential calculations). If a man fires a pistol in a crowded theater because he thinks he is being threatened, and the bullet "accidentally" hits an innocent party, the law holds him responsible for the foreseeable consequences of his actions. It is no use his saying that he didn't intend to shoot innocent persons. It is also of little use arguing that the helpless crowd had been previously warned that a man with a gun was in the theater. Why was he carrying a gun into the theater anyway? As far as the law is concerned, and quite rightly so, either the man is deranged and should be restrained, or, being of normally sound mind, he must have realized the probable consequences of his ac-



DRAWINGS BY ISADORE SELTZER

Philip Green is Sophia Smith Professor of Government at Smith College and author of Retrieving Democracy: In Search of Civic Equality *(Rowman and Allanheld).*

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tion and should therefore be held accountable.

Unfortunately, the analogy is not an analogy but is rather a fairly accurate description of what has happened. The United States claims a right unilaterally to protect "freedom of the seas" in the Persian Gulf and to establish its own rules of engagement in a war to which this country is not even a recognized party. (It was Iraq, not Iran, that by attacking the Stark precipitated formal U.S. engagement in the gulf war.) Pursuant to that claim, the President of the United States, the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the head of U.S. naval operations in the gulf together decided, *inter alia*, to station a warship within the boundaries of the only civilian flight path across the gulf, where it would inevitably become involved in a firefight; and authorized the ship's commander to shoot when he thought he was being attacked. That is to say, they put him in a crowded theater with a gun and authorized him to fire at will. They had alternative courses of action available, none of which would have entailed conducting belligerent operations in the civilian flight path. They chose to do what they did, and in any court of law it would be held that they intended the reasonably foreseeable consequences of their actions. Their pawn, Commander Rogers, may perhaps be forgiven by history for acting as he did, but I suspect that when the dust has settled, history's judgment on President Reagan and his henchmen will be exactly what they deserve for putting a cocked and loaded gun in the hands of a panic-stricken man in a crowded theater.

My own view is that the President of the United States *is* deranged. There is evidence enough that he neither understands the difference between right and wrong nor possesses the ability to foresee the likely outcome of his own actions. At a minimum, what must be said about the President is that he lacks all sense of moral responsibility (he is, after all, the man who said he "accepted responsibility" for the bombing of the Marine barracks in Beirut and then did absolutely nothing to discharge that responsibility); and that, in concert with too many of his fellow citizens, he has an unquestioned sense of his own innocence that is not charming but malignantly destructive. He is the same President who thought it was perfectly all right to trade arms for hostages because he had the good intention of freeing the hostages. Now he and the Vice President tell us that the obliteration of Flight 655 was "a proper defensive action," as though the Vincennes had been under attack from the air and as though only American lives counted. Perhaps, as Machiavelli argued, national leaders (and the military) cannot be held to the same moral standard as the rest of us. Certainly they themselves incessantly lecture the rest of us on the limits of the possible and the need to be "realistic." But they have failed to learn Machiavelli's first lesson for Lorenzo if they don't know that good intentions are precisely what the road to hell is paved with.

Why, exactly, the United States presumes to act as the world policeman is another story, to be sure. To some of us the old-fashioned concept of imperialism—and especially, in this case, oil imperialism—is a satisfactory explanation. Others, in the tradition of liberal realism, think that there is a truly necessary task of policing the world to be done, and

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that if only the American penchant for unilateralism could be restrained in favor of some multilateral, U.N.-oriented peacekeeping process, world peace would be promoted. For unrepentent cold warriors, the United States is doing a job that has to be done and probably should be doing more of it: "liberating" here, subverting there, trashing evil empires and installing puppet "democrats" wherever it can. Whether the United States has either the right or the duty to be patrolling the Persian Gulf is thus the source of another, and much more complex, argument. One thing is certain, though. If leaders and a people are so thoroughly unable to distinguish between the morally defensible use of armed force and its reckless, uncaring deployment, they ought not even to be policing a beat at the southwesternmost corner of Staten Island, let alone the so-called free world. □

OPERATION CONDOR 6

The U.S. Drug War in Peru

PETER ANDREAS

In its effort to escalate the war on drugs, the Reagan Administration has become entangled in South America's most intense and brutal counterinsurgency campaign. In Peru's Upper Huallaga Valley, Condor 6, a U.S.-sponsored narcotics control operation, works side by side with a campaign by militarized Peruvian police to wrest control of the jungle region from drug traffickers and the Maoist insurgents of Sendero Luminoso ("Shining Path").

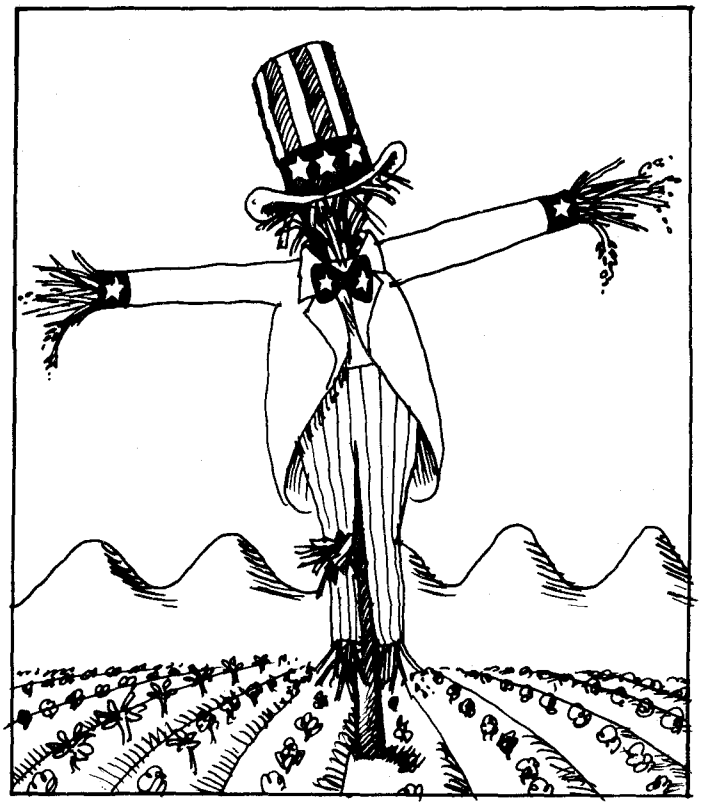
Condor 6, which got off the ground last July, uses three U.S.-contracted Bell helicopters and one State Department–supplied C-123 transport plane, which are flown by U.S. pilots, according to the State Department. The helicopters and their pilots and mechanics are provided by Evergreen Air, which has been linked to the Central Intelligence Agency. The agency owned Evergreen Air during the Vietnam War, and in 1984 CBS News reported that the C.I.A. was using Evergreen to fly guns and other military supplies to the *contras* in Honduras. Calls to Evergreen Air inquiring about the Peru operation were not returned.

The State Department says that Evergreen's role in Condor 6 is to transport supplies and provide rapid mobility to Peruvian troops. U.S. officials in Washington and Peru are careful to emphasize that counterinsurgency is neither the intent nor the focus of the program. The distinction between counterinsurgency and antinarcotics operations is critical for the legitimacy of Condor 6, but several State Department officials who oversee Peruvian affairs admit that the line between the two is sometimes blurry in the war-torn valley. "The two blend very easily," said Edward Vasquez, the Peru Desk Officer at the State Department. "There is some overlap." Another department official explained that the distinction can disappear in practice, since militarized police troops battle both the drug traffickers and the insurgents.

A high-level Peruvian government official familiar with Condor 6 claimed that "the goal of our operations in the Upper Huallaga is to eradicate violence in general: Whoever is armed is the enemy. It makes little difference whether it be a drug trafficker or a terrorist." The official said Peru wants more U.S. assistance in the drug-enforcement effort. He welcomed the expected arrival of three more U.S. helicopters in the near future.

Drug Enforcement Administration officials in both Washington and Lima referred all inquiries regarding Condor 6 to the State Department. The Peruvian Embassy did likewise. "They know more about the program down there than we do," said spokeswoman Patricia Nalvarte. The embassy, she added, was unaware that U.S. pilots were involved in Condor 6. The U.S. Embassy in Peru would not disclose the number of D.E.A. personnel working with the operation, citing "security reasons."

For a decade, the Upper Huallaga Valley has been a major coca-producing zone, in which government programs and antidrug efforts have been halfhearted. With the growing guerrilla presence, the area has won the government's attention—and Washington's as well. To add to the headaches of both the Reagan Administration and Peruvian President Alan García, the war has been widened by the emergence of a second rapidly expanding guerrilla group in the jungle region, the Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement (M.R.T.A.). Although some official efforts are now being made to promote development and alternative crops for peasant coca producers in the region, the government's concern is clearly focused on the expansion of the insurgencies. As one well-



Peter Andreas is an editorial assistant at Foreign Policy. *He recently returned from a three-month visit to Peru.*

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informed Peruvian official put it, "Our first goal is pacification, then development. What we need in the region is a complete security system." Last November, after a major M.R.T.A. offensive, a military state of emergency was declared in the area, officially recognizing it as a war zone.

The people of the Upper Huallaga Valley are colonists, lured to the region partly by government-sponsored programs in the 1960s and 1970s. As the programs failed, they increasingly turned to coca production. The subsequent coca boom, stimulated by the demand of U.S. consumers, drew thousands more to the valley like a magnet. "Unfortunately," noted an agrarian development expert from an international organization who has been working on crop substitution in the valley, "government law-enforcement efforts have hurt peasant coca growers more than the drug traffickers. These efforts doubly victimize and label the peasant producer both as 'drug trafficker' and as 'terrorist,' when actually the peasant is neither." While small-scale peasant coca growers bear the brunt of government repression, there are few cases of a major drug trafficker being caught. Ironically, the biggest recent catch came last fall, when a well-known drug lord and his armed thugs were involved in a lengthy shootout with Sendero Luminoso insurgents. Once they were surrounded by the guerrillas and the situation became desperate, they called for a police rescue.

The agrarian development expert claims that government antidrug efforts are actually helping stimulate the expansion of coca production. "The ironic and tragic consequence of the government's drug enforcement operations," he said, "has been the dramatic spread of coca cultivation in recent years. As repression has intensified, peasant coca growers have naturally expanded production to new and more remote areas." Ann Wrobleski, the Assistant Secretary of State for International Narcotics Matters, testified last fall before the House Task Force on International Narcotics Control that coca production has indeed grown at an alarming rate, despite U.S. efforts to curb it. (In fact, it has grown sixfold in the past ten years.) Wrobleski failed to mention the possibility that the very drug-enforcement program she promotes may be partly to blame.

Despite the program's poor record, antinarcotics assistance to Peru nearly doubled between 1986 and 1987, and has increased again for 1988. And despite Washington's annoyance with García's sharp nationalist rhetoric and his rebellious position on the debt issue, U.S. officials have nothing but praise for the Peruvian President's cooperation against drugs.

The American anticocaine connection to counterinsurgency has caused no alarm in Washington. "Antinarcotics" assistance is politically popular and appears justified in the eyes of a drug-scared Congress and public. Few notice that Condor 6, packaged as a drug-enforcement operation, places U.S. pilots and helicopters in the thick of an escalating war.

Ironically, Condor 6 may actually be stimulating not only the expansion of coca cultivation but also the guerrilla insurgency. Not surprisingly, Sendero Luminoso has quickly seized on the grievances of angry peasant coca growers and gained some support by denouncing the antinarcotics opera-

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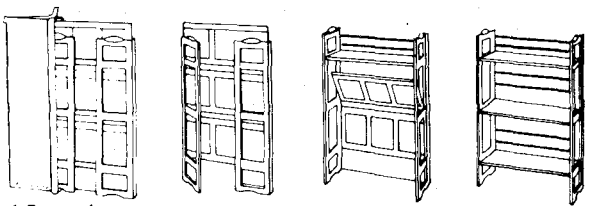

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tions and helping shield the growers from both exploitation by drug traffickers and repression at the hands of the U.S.-supported government forces.

Paramilitary operations designed to "go to the source" of drug production are a losing battle. In 1986 Operation Blast Furnace dispatched U.S. troops to Bolivia in the battle against cocaine, only to prove an embarrassing disappointment. There is no reason to believe that Condor 6, located in the middle of one of Peru's hottest war zones, will do any better. Throwing more money at the problem while promoting the militarization of the valley only adds fuel to Peru's already raging fire of social upheaval. □

'Narcoguerrillas'

(*Continued From Front Cover*)

This language is in line with a familiar vision of the United States besieged by foreign devils, but it obscures the essential difference between drug traffickers and Marxist insurgents. The notion of a "narcoguerrilla" unites what can't be united: Top traffickers are hugely successful capitalists bent on boosting their earnings and their social status. Marxist rebels want to overthrow capitalism altogether. These contradictory objectives explain why guerrillas and traffickers are killing each other in Peru and Colombia, and why the Medellín cocaine cartel lurks behind Colombia's dirty war. The narcoguerrilla notion ignores not only these realities but the political impact of Latin America's exploding drug industry. The voracious U.S. demand for cocaine has jolted regional economies, thrusting to center stage a violent new actor in Latin American politics: the narco New Right.

The narcos want to get into the establishment, not overthrow it. They see bloodshed as part of the price of admission to the ruling class—a reasonable reading of Latin American history. The introduction of coffee in Colombia at the end of the last century brought on a civil war. Brazil's cacao boom gave rise to the corrupt killers made famous by Jorge Amado in his novel *The Violent Land*. Eventually the captains of coffee and cacao bought and bludgeoned their way into the oligarchy, and the same is almost certain to happen with the rising new stratum of cocaine capitalists.

The narcos seek to legitimize their nouveau riche status through nationalism, and their nationalism infects their investment decisions. Latin American elites traditionally squirrel away their dollars in foreign banks and buy second houses overseas, but traffickers "don't want to go to the south of France," as one U.S. diplomat told me. "They don't speak French." What they do speak is the language of money. Traffickers bring back drug dollars and invest heavily in the national economy. In Colombia they repatriate between $1 billion and $2 billion annually. Last year they "reactivated" the economy, according to the controller general. The steady devaluation of the Colombian peso makes dollar repatriation on this scale an unsound business practice, but traffickers are moved by more than the profit motive. They want bank accounts in Switzerland, but they want social status in Colombia too. So they accumulate flashy adornments like soccer teams and fighting bulls, and they also make blue-chip investments. "They are in industry, business, finance, agriculture, construction and real estate," says Colombian Senator Iván Marulanda, a businessman who represents the region that includes Medellín. They are Colombia's "largest capitalists, the largest landowners," he says. As if to announce their arrival in the aristocracy, they made the ultimate gesture of noblesse oblige by offering twice to pay, partially or entirely, Colombia's foreign debt.

But all of their drug dollars can't buy them a drink in Colombia's best social clubs, and this rankles the narcos no end. "I don't need those sons of bitches in the clubs," fumed leading cartel member Carlos Lehder on one occasion. The traffickers were in fact well on their way to social acceptance until they murdered Justice Minister Rodrigo Lara Bonilla in 1984, probably in reprisal for the Tranquilandia raid seven weeks earlier. But Lara Bonilla's death made the narcos social pariahs; an embarrassed elite moved to exclude them from high society and deny them an open role in politics. The symbol of this rejection is extradition, a policy executed by presidents from both ruling parties. Extradition enrages the drug lords because it ratifies in Colombia the U.S. definition of traffickers as criminal deviants, not successful businessmen. They have responded by attacking Colombia's ruling elites as holier-than-thou hypocrites. Acting as "The Extraditables," they murdered an attorney general and kidnapped the son of a former president while issuing an indignant manifesto denouncing government, church, press, industrial and financial leaders as "the real mafia."

The emergence of a self-conscious, violent, drug-dealing class is not unique to Colombia. Bolivian traffickers allied with the military ruled their country for a decade beginning in 1971 with the vicious right-wing reign of Gen. Hugo Banzer Suárez and culminated in Gen. Luís García Meza's 1980 "cocaine coup." García Meza brought in Nazis such as Klaus Barbie and put the Interior Ministry under the control of the nephew of Roberto Suárez Gómez, the self-styled King of Cocaine. In the past Suárez rivaled the Medellín moguls in ambition and earnings, and shared their lust for legitimacy. Just like Colombian cartel kingpin Pablo Escobar Gaviria—"Don Pablo" to the slum dwellers of Medellín—Suárez polished a folk-hero image by doling out money to the poor. And like the Colombian cartel, Suárez once offered to pay off his country's foreign debt.

Suárez is only the tip of the iceberg. The Bolivian drug trade is big enough to have produced a narco newly rich class like Colombia's. And the Bolivian traffickers, like their

Merrill Collett writes frequently on Latin America for The Washington Post *and* The Christian Science Monitor. *This article was partially funded by a grant from the Fund for Investigative Journalism. Research assistance was provided by Laura Crosby in Washington and New York. InterNation is an international consortium of publications and journalists, producing investigative stories on subjects that cross national boundaries.*

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Colombian counterparts, make themselves big fish in the national pond by repatriating narcobucks even though economic logic tells them to invest their dollars abroad. Ignoring a five-digit inflation rate in the mid-1980s, traffickers faithfully repatriated an estimated $486 million annually.

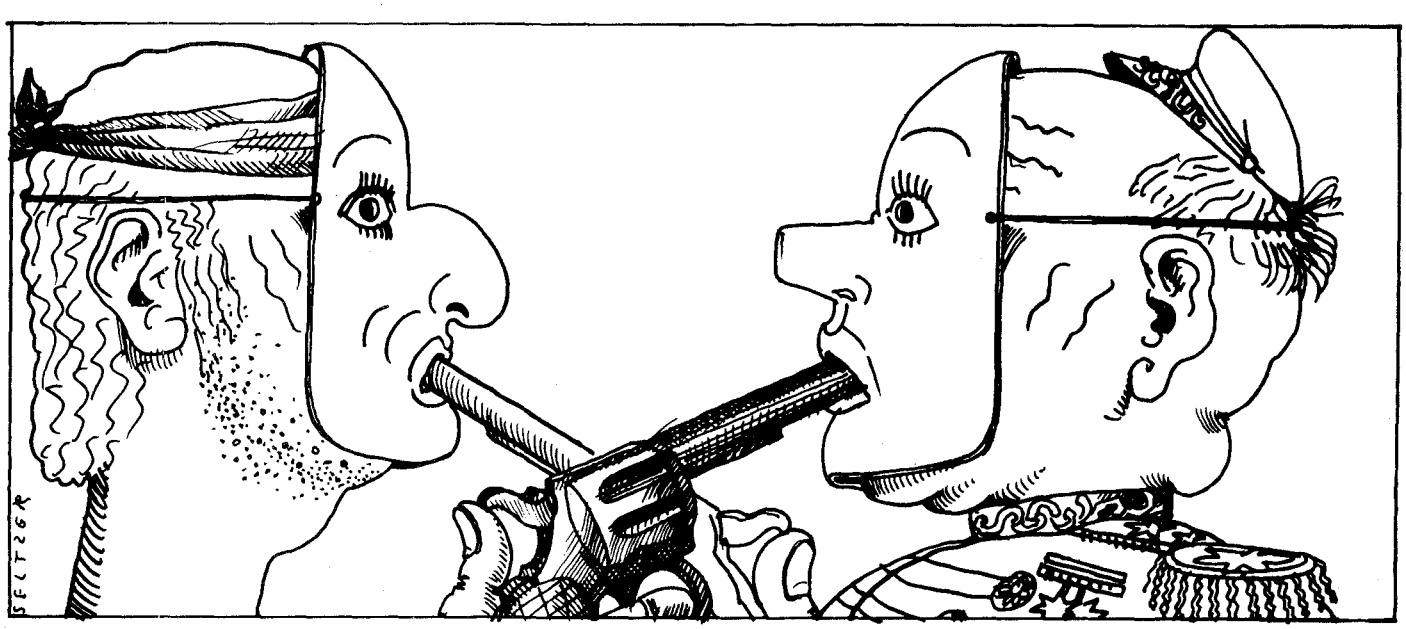
Peru is a somewhat different case. The Peruvian drug trade is large, providing a third of the country's foreign export earnings by some accounts, but Peru has no narco national bourgeoisie because the trade is almost entirely controlled from abroad, by the Colombian cartel. Peasants in the Upper Huallaga Valley, where a third to a half of the world's coca leaf is grown, sell their coca paste to seven or eight groups of Colombian middlemen based in the area. These middlemen fly the paste to cartel labs on the Colombian border to be refined and shipped north. It's a classic dependency relationship: The valley is a virtual colony of the cartel. Peruvian peasants are raw-material producers who earn only 0.5 percent of the retail value of the final product. The cartel's dominance is so complete that Colombian *cumbia* music is heard on every jukebox and kids swap the latest slang from Medellín.

Before the cartel consolidated its grip on the Huallaga Valley, Carlos Langberg, a Peruvian, blazed an alternate drug trade route through Mexico to the United States. Following a familiar pattern, Langberg used his illicit millions to buy legitimacy through politics. He eased himself into the upper echelons of the Apra Party by bankrolling its 1980 campaign. But Langberg didn't want to keep behind the scenes; so, like Carlos Lehder in Colombia, he launched a newspaper. He made himself its chief columnist and spewed out a steady stream of right-wing populism in 350,000 copies distributed free every day. His ambition was his undoing. The paper caught the eye of curious reporters, who exposed him as a drug trafficker, and Langberg was sentenced to fifteen years in Lima's Canto Grande Prison. The imprisonment of Langberg and another big-time trafficker, Reynaldo Rodríguez López, reveals the shallow roots of the Peruvian drug trade. In Colombia, no jail can hold a member of the narcobourgeoisie. They are "stronger than the state," says former President Belisario Betancur.

But they are not stronger than the guerrillas. In both Colombia and Peru, Marxist insurgents are an irritating, and often bloody, thorn in the side of the cartel. Traffickers endure the insurgents not out of choice but because they have to face up to a geographic truth: Guerrillas occupy the chief coca-growing regions.

Twenty-five years ago Colombian peasant rebels joined with the country's Communist Party and formed the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, or the FARC. Defeated by the army, FARC guerrillas retreated into the sparsely populated southeastern corner of the country and became armed peasant pioneers. They were joined by a steady stream of settlers seeking land in a nation without effective land reform. This trickle turned into a torrent in the late 1970s. The demand for cocaine in the United States had outstripped the supply of coca leaf in Bolivia and Peru, making the low-quality leaves of the Colombian coca shrub a highly profitable crop. The boom was on in Colombia's Amazon jungle and along the riverbanks of the eastern plains.

Narco-entrepreneurs from Medellín and Cali organized the trade. In some cases they set it up as a cottage industry, selling independent small farmers coca seeds and processing chemicals and buying back their half-processed coca paste. In other cases, the narcos hired day laborers to clear the jungle and sow coca on plantations owned by the traffickers themselves. Whatever the arrangement, the narcobusinessmen tried to keep day wages and coca paste prices down. But the bottom line was drawn by the FARC, which made itself into an armed trade union for Colombia's coca *campesinos*. The guerrillas, who now have at least a third of their forces in coca-growing regions, fix prices for day laborers on coca plantations, agitate to keep paste prices up and prevent abuses by cartel gunmen. "It's a contract arrived at under the threat of force," says historian Alvaro Delgado, a member of the Communist Party's central committee.



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Some profits do go to the FARC, which takes a cut of all crops grown in the areas they administer, including coca. They also put the squeeze on cartel middlemen by levying a 10 percent transit "tax" on drug shipments passing through guerrilla territory. (These funds became more important to the FARC after it agreed to stop kidnapping for ransom as part of the 1984 peace accord with Betancur's government.) But the FARC does not "protect" cocaine laboratories, as Tambs charged after the Tranquilandia raid, and the State Department repeated in its March 1988 report on the world drug trade. After the fall of Tranquilandia the cartel moved its cocaine-refining operations either to ranches in the department of Antioquia or deep into jungles along the Colombia-Brazil-Peru border region. The "labs" occasionally raided by antidrug police in FARC territory are only the crude pits used by peasants to produce coca paste.

The real functional relationship between the FARC "fish" and the "sea" of coca *campesinos* is turned upside down by U.S. analysts yearning to confirm what the U.S. Embassy in Bogotá calls the "FARC-narc connection." In a 1985 article, Mark Steinitz, an officer in the State Department's Bureau of Intelligence and Research, cited Bogotá embassy sources who asserted that the Colombian Communist Party had endorsed "FARC's overall cooperative relationship with Colombia's drug barons" at its Seventh National Congress in 1982. The idea is farfetched: In 1982 the Medellín cartel was carrying out a murderous assault on the left, including individuals associated with Colombia's four main guerrilla groups. On November 12, 1981, three members of the leftist M-19 organization had seized the 26-year-old daughter of Fabio Ochoa Restrepo, patriarch of Colombia's first family of cocaine. The guerrillas demanded $12 million for her return. The Ochoa kidnapping was the latest in a series of guerrilla attacks on rich narcos, and it infuriated them. A leaflet airdropped three weeks later over a Cali soccer game announced that traffickers were fed up with Communists preying on those "like us, who have brought progress and jobs to Colombia," and declared their intention to counterattack with an underground army called MAS (*Muerte a Secuestradores*, or "Death to Kidnappers"). It was a turning point in the political history of the cartel. "MAS represented the [drug] mafia's first organized expression in defense of its economic interests," says Senator Marulanda.

MAS assault teams promptly captured a half-dozen M-19 guerrillas and Ochoa's daughter was released unharmed. MAS then broadened its focus from M-19 in Medellín to leftists throughout the country. MAS death squads carrying identification from the army intelligence service rounded up and shot peasant and union leaders, progressive university professors and attorneys who defended political prisoners. Over the next five years hundreds of political killings would be attributed to MAS, including the murder of Toledo Plata, one of the top M-19 leaders. In February 1983 Attorney General Carlos Jiménez Gómez charged that among those involved in MAS were fifty-nine active-duty military officers. The highest-ranking suspect was Lieut. Col. Alvaro Hernán Velandia, whose case sheds light on the murky narco/military convergence that underlies Colombia's present dirty war.

In 1982, Velandia, MAS, the FARC and the narcos were all active in the middle sector of the Magdalena River basin in the north-central region of Colombia. The narcos were buying up land abandoned by wealthy ranchers fleeing from the FARC. Velandia, an expert in counterinsurgency, was hunting the guerrillas. MAS was hunting guerrilla sympathizers. Ranchers, the military and MAS formed a "triangle of terror," according to Chilean sociologist Ibán de Rementería, who studied the violence in the middle Magdalena region. This three-way alliance has spread to all of Colombia, according to historian Alfredo Molano. When leftists are murdered, "the [drug] mafia supplies the money [to hire gunmen], the military the arms, and members of the local elites an air of legitimacy," Molano told a reporter earlier this year.

Velandia went on to head the army's highly secret Intelligence and Counter-Intelligence Battalion. He has been named by the leftist Patriotic Union (U.P.), the political party founded by the FARC, as one of the masterminds of Colombia's current dirty war. Velandia can look back with satisfaction on his efforts in the middle Magdalena; the FARC was pushed out of the area. The narcos, meanwhile, settled in. Two czars of the cartel, Gonzalo Rodríguez Gacha and Pablo Escobar Gaviria, own large haciendas in the middle Magdalena, and in May 1988 two enormous cocaine labs were discovered in the area. "MAS wiped out the guerrilla support network and created the conditions for the narcos to live there in peace," says Fabio Castillo, a Colombian journalist and author of the current best seller *The Horsemen of Cocaine.*

MAS is dormant these days, but the narcos are still killing FARC sympathizers. There is well-documented evidence that cartel kingpins are involved in the dirty war against the U.P. Nearly 600 party members have been gunned down since the U.P. was launched in 1984, after the FARC-government peace pact. The common thread running through these crimes—none of them prosecuted—is the modus operandi. Unknown assassins arrive, murder their victims in well-planned, smoothly executed attacks and disappear. Such professionalism is the trademark of the *sicarios*, or paid killers, used by the cartel to murder rivals and defiant

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authorities, but the evidence of narco involvement in the dirty war is more than circumstantial. Government prosecutors contend that Rodríguez Gacha paid a band of six *sicarios* $120,000 to murder U.P. chair Jaime Pardo Leal last October. The element conspicuously absent from the government's case is the motive.

To explain why a top trafficker would kill Colombia's leading leftist requires a step back. It is a matter of economics. The fixing of wages and prices by the FARC was a yoke around the neck of the narcos. "The mafiosos respected the guerrilla rules, but they didn't like them," says retired Gen. Joaquín Matallana, an expert on both the FARC and the drug trade. The guerrilla burden was bearable when cocaine prices were rising, but in 1986 coca overproduction swamped the U.S. market. The wholesale price of a kilo of cocaine—$55,000 in 1983—had dropped to $22,000 by the end of 1986, beginning a downward slide that still continues. Traffickers decided it was time "to liberate themselves from the economic impositions of the guerrillas," says Matallana, now president of the cattle ranchers' association in the coca-growing, FARC-controlled plains of southeastern Colombia. Matallana says it was here that the narcos linked up with military officers in a clandestine, anti-Communist alliance. Together they set their sights on the FARC's unarmed flank, the Patriotic Union. Eight party members were shot dead, including an alternate deputy to congress and the mayor of the regional capital of San José de Guaviare. The FARC counterattacked by murdering a half-dozen members of the Plata family, which handled the local coca trade for Rodríguez Gacha. This chain of violence finally reached to the top when Rodríguez Gacha allegedly contracted the murder of U.P. leader Pardo.

A similar pattern of violence is starting to characterize the relations between cartel middlemen and the Maoist rebels of Sendero Luminoso ("Shining Path") in Peru's coca-growing Huallaga Valley. Sendero guerrillas moved into the valley in 1984, but it was not until last year that they became a major political force there. Interviews gathered during a five-day trip through the valley in May confirm that Sendero now dominates dozens of tiny villages and strongly influences several large towns. This was achieved by exploiting the contradictions of the drug economy. Some 60,000 families depend on coca cultivation to survive, and U.S. attempts to eliminate the valley drug trade throw these farmers into "a panic," says Hugo Samánez, director of the valley's U.S.-financed coca eradication project. The guerrillas provide a shield against the eradication effort while mitigating the abuses of cartel middlemen and their private armies. Like the FARC in Colombia, they take a cut of peasant coca production and levy a transit "tax" on the coca buyers. And like the FARC, Sendero has not traded its political goals for drug profits.

The guerrillas are in the Huallaga Valley because its forest canopy offers a secure place to carve out a liberated territory. "They have studied the Vietnam situation closely," says Gustavo Gorriti, a Peruvian journalist writing a book on Sendero, "and they consider the Upper Huallaga like the Mekong Delta. It's absolutely essential in their geopolitical thinking." With so much at stake, the guerrillas are carrying out a systematic campaign of eliminating all competing authority in the valley. The guerrillas, whose ideology is extremely puritanical, have warned peasants that they must eventually phase out coca cultivation, which would pull the rug out from under the cartel. The Colombians have countered with the threat to organize an army against the guerrillas. Tensions erupted in a shootout last September, when a hundred guerrillas launched an attack on thirty traffickers holed up in a bunker in the town of Paraíso, according to Gen. Juan Zarate, head of Peru's antidrug police.

Those who push the narcoguerrilla notion explain such shootouts as passing feuds rather than the first salvos in a war between staunchly opposed social forces. This fallacy derives from an ideological bias. The narcoguerrilla is less an analytical model than a political slogan. Former Ambassador Tambs, a fervent anti-Communist and close colleague of North Carolina Senator Jesse Helms, invented his "narcoguerrilla" only weeks before the Colombian government was to sign the first-ever cease-fire with the rebels there in May 1984. His announcement nearly sabotaged the peace process by giving the military an excuse to escalate the fighting. "This narco-guerrilla alliance is a new threat to democracy," explained Defense Minister Gen. Gustavo Matamoros in March 1984, "and if we don't act rapidly and energetically it could put our constitutional system in danger."

Four years later it can be said with certainty that what endangers the Colombian constitution is not the narcoguerrilla but the "triangle of terror" that first took shape in the middle Magdalena. There are persistent rumblings that this murderous alliance may seek a military solution to Colombia's "leftist problem." If there is a cocaine coup in Colombia, Washington will have some real "narcoguerrillas" to deal with. And the phantom dreamed up by Tambs will have finally come to life. □

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BOOKS & THE ARTS.

The Morning After

LARRY BENSKY

SECRET WARRIORS: Inside the Covert Military Operations of the Reagan Era. *By Steven Emerson. G.P. Putnam's Sons. 256 pp. $17.95.*

BEST LAID PLANS: The Inside Story of America's War Against Terrorism. *By David C. Martin and John Walcott. Harper & Row. 392 pp. $22.50.*

GUTS AND GLORY: The Rise and Fall of Oliver North. *By Ben Bradlee Jr. Donald I. Fine. 572 pp. $21.95.*

Readers plowing through the evidence emerging from within the crumbling turrets of the Reagan Administration's covert castles are likely to be alternately intrigued, amused, horrified and, ultimately, puzzled. The puzzle lies in the credentials of those examining these ruins. These three books, for example, are written by competent journalists employed by such eminent media institutions as CBS News, *U.S. News & World Report*, *The Wall Street Journal* and *The Boston Globe*. And that's puzzling, because each in its way concludes that the covert/subvert intrigues of the Reagan years were a dangerous, counterproductive, even murderous disaster, guided by out of control eccentrics and doomed to bring discredit and disgrace upon their perpetrators. The puzzle lies not so much in the proliferation of detail, numbing at times, to support the authors' discomforting conclusions, but in that such a constellation of facts emerges only now, when the President and what's left of his men are heading for the gilded comforts of the provinces.

Where were CBS News and *The Wall Street Journal* when "the President's involvement in foreign affairs was episodic, anecdotal, impulsive, and rarely decisive," as CBS's David Martin and *The Journal*'s John Walcott conclude? Did we hear *that* from our television sets and newspapers as events in Iran and Lebanon and Libya unfolded? Or did we miss a daily drumbeat of caution, which tried to warn us against the President's "most trusted tactics . . . accepting responsibility without confessing error, taking blame without admitting error, stopping the buck without telling the whole truth," another insight now belatedly provided in *Best Laid Plans*?

As for *U.S. News & World Report*, did we fail to get the issues that told the story of how "covert actions became so extensively employed that to a large extent they became a substitute for diplomacy in the foreign policy of the Reagan era"? Even when such an established, influential institution as *The Boston Globe* decided it was time to break some of the news on Oliver North, did other media follow sufficiently? And did we then have sufficient information to decide if he is "a persecuted patriotic victim, just following orders," or "a mysterious cowboy run amok"?

These are, of course, the *inter alia* conclusions of the reporter/authors under review, not those of their employer/controllers who, in their corporate wisdom, slice and paste the works of their employees to fit the appropriate daily mold. Nevertheless, one would have welcomed discussion of this matter in all three of these tomes. In its absence, it would seem that the subtext of Bob Woodward's *Veil* is applicable here as well: Trading access for pledges of secrecy allows everyone to prosper. The "sources" continue on their merry way, plying the truncheons of power and pillaging the public treasury, while the erstwhile chroniclers of those deeds, working on company time, compile enough material to justify a few months off to write books that relatively few will read, and that will make little difference.

It doubtless would have made a difference, for example, if Steven Emerson had been out there gracing each week's issue of *U.S. News & World Report* with the ongoing results of his 250 interviews, and analyzing his 100,000 pages of documents as a work in progress—as *journalism*. We could certainly have profited from earlier knowledge, for example, of the Army's Special Operations Forces' quaint anthem, "Push legalities to their outer limits. Stay generally within the rules and regulations if you can, but first get the job done." This is not to be ungrateful for the synthesis that Emerson has, however tardily, provided. *Secret Warriors* tells some amazing stories, especially of the Army's agencies that "do not officially exist" and are backed up by detachments that specialize "in supplying undercover credentials, handling special bank accounts, moving money around without alerting law enforcement or customs."

Within such a structure, and with such a "push legalities" philosophy, strange humanoids develop. Some, as Emerson shows, are borderline degenerates; some take consolation in arcane parapsychology; most luxuriate in the incontrovertible comfort of true belief. Each type makes an appearance in Emerson's chronicle, with its wealth of detail and its relatively brief exegesis of past scandals.

Many of the same incidents are gone over, with minor differences in depth and emphasis, in *Best Laid Plans*. Unfortunately, Martin and Walcott choose to hang their tale on the slippery concept of "terrorism." They note early on that "one research guide cited 109 different definitions of terrorism set forth between 1936 and 1981," and that the C.I.A. itself provided the central conundrum as long ago as 1976: "One man's terrorist is another man's freedom fighter." Having said that, they move on to uncritical acceptance of anything which made the Reaganauts squirm as "terrorism," from the unknown spirits in Col. Muammar el-Qaddafi's tent to the now discredited "plot" to kill the Pope.

None of these three books, in fact, seems to have benefited from research into alternative ways of analyzing "terrorism." You will search them in vain for citations from the numerous researchers who have written over the past ten years in the *Covert Action Information Bulletin*, or from the insights of Chomsky and Herman, in such books as *The Culture of Terrorism* and *The Real Terror Network: Terrorism in Fact and Propaganda*.

Nevertheless, there is value in even such a narrow perspective as these reporters present, because they have mined that crumbling Reagan castle for facts. Martin and Walcott's exegesis of how the Pentagon's various tentacles contradicted and confused each other, while the intelligence "community" and the State Department were doing the same, is especially revealing. With "thirty-one . . . units [in Beirut] reporting di-

*Larry Bensky is National Affairs Correspondent for Pacifica Radio. He won a George Polk Award for his coverage of the Iran/*contra *Congressional hearings.*

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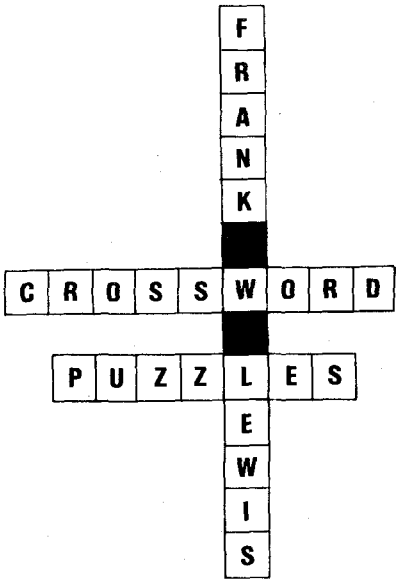

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rectly to the Pentagon without following the chain of command" and "so many secret schemes going forward simultaneously [to deal with hostages held in the Middle East] . . . it was almost impossible for anyone to tell which plans were real, which were shots in the dark, and which were merely cover stories to conceal something else"—anyone pretending to be in control *was* in control.

At least, such a person could pretend to be in control, and others had to pretend to believe him. Enter one Oliver North, a man whose need for pretense and thirst for power seem fantastically commingled, and whose inner workings cry out for analysis, lest one be left with the raw public image. But a biography whose subject is uncooperative, and who has the power to keep his family and legal advisers from cooperating, must, of necessity, be preliminary. *Guts and Glory* is such a book.

Ben Bradlee Jr. tries to make up for his lack of access with an abundance of background. The result is a book about twice as long as it needs to be, and twice as difficult to absorb. Pages and pages go by without a significant mention of North, as Bradlee tries to compress history around his subject. The early chapters, however, are quite useful in understanding just how narrow and zealous North was destined to become; one could almost predict a military death, or a life of civilian frustration, for a person formed as Bradlee details.

Central to the emerging image of North—and central to an understanding of the covert cabal in which he flourished—are the concepts of control and belief. North, Bradlee concludes, lived a life punctuated by public and private statements which were "either untrue, strongly denied, or unconfirmable and thought to be untrue." Since he alone claimed to know what was going on, both within himself as self-directed servant of God and flag, and within the governmental whirlwind that he both created and served, North was a closed loop. Theoretically trained to obey control, he instead obeyed belief. No one could confirm what he expounded, but confirmation was not necessary to his continuing operation. No one could deny his contentions, because denial merely led to further fantasy.

As such, North was a personification of the phenomenon which he purported to administer. Unpleasant realities, even those supported by multibillion-dollar clandestine research, could be dismissed

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when they proved ideologically inconvenient. "It is one of the paradoxes of the Reagan years," write Martin and Walcott, "that an administration so dedicated to rebuilding America's intelligence capabilities could be so contemptuous of the products they produced." Facts didn't matter; beliefs and attitudes took their place, as convenience dictated.

One comes to the inevitable conclusion, in reading these books, that for the select group of militarized minds suddenly in control of worldwide life and death, the exaltation of accomplishment was a game. And you couldn't really lose, because you could keep changing the rules governing what winning meant. Faced with a wide range of tougher, reality-grounded, relatively intractable obstacles—Iranian negotiators, Israeli intelligence officers, Nicaraguan revolutionaries, Panamanian drug dealers—the covert operators inevitably lost on the field, but won in their minds. Because they got to keep on playing.

Reading about all this in retrospect is illuminating. Reading about it sooner might well have changed the game. □

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TIMOTHY FERRIS

THE DREAMS OF REASON: The Computer and the Rise of the Sciences of Complexity. *By Heinz Pagels. Simon & Schuster. 352 pp. $18.95.*

The exact sciences, however complex their implications, traditionally have been obliged to limit their immediate attention almost entirely to the simple. The practitioners of particle physics may investigate matters as consequential as the evolution of stars or the colors of hummingbird wings, but the equations they actually employ normally deal with only the bare-bones interactions of a few tiny particles at a time. Cosmologists may talk in sweeping terms of the shape and scope of the universe, but in practice they deal with radically simplified models in which entire galaxies are reduced to mere pinpoints. If the immediate world of the working scientist were a stage, it would be limited either to a few actors or (as in the case of thermodynamics and statistical mechanics) to a crowd of actors who all behave in more or less the same way, like the chorus in an opera.

Missing from exact scientific scrutiny have been the complex systems, those made up of many individual actors all going their individual ways. There are many such systems—they include the oceans, the atmosphere, living cells, the human brain and the stock market—and they are of great interest to humans, who are, after all, themselves just about the most complex entities around. If science could predict their behavior as successfully as it does that of simple systems, the implications would be enormous.

Lately there have emerged strong if preliminary indications that science is indeed beginning to break the bonds of its fixation upon the simple. The technological agency responsible for the change is the computer. The reason that researchers in the exact sciences previously had to confine themselves to the study of rudimentary systems was that the calculations involved in attempting anything more ambitious became hopelessly time-consuming. If, for instance, one could somehow obtain exact information on the motions of every individual raindrop in a storm cloud, the data would be practically useless in predicting what the cloud was going to do next, because it would take years just to begin to solve the necessary equations. But this sort of number-crunching (and, for that matter, data-gathering) is just what computers are good at. Already, computers are being used to model situations whose complexity had once put them beyond the range of human consideration—the flow of air over a jet fighter's wings, for instance, or the ebb of ocean tides in a bay. As more of the appropriate algorithms are identified or invented and are harnessed to the power of the computer, it may become possible to understand and predict the performance of extremely complex systems, including, perhaps, the human organizations involved in war and peace and finance. The consequences of such a development would be so profound that the advent of "complexity science" (or "chaos science," or whatever one calls it—the

Timothy Ferris teaches science writing at the Graduate School of Journalism of the University of California, Berkeley. His new book, Coming of Age in the Milky Way, *was just published by William Morrow.*

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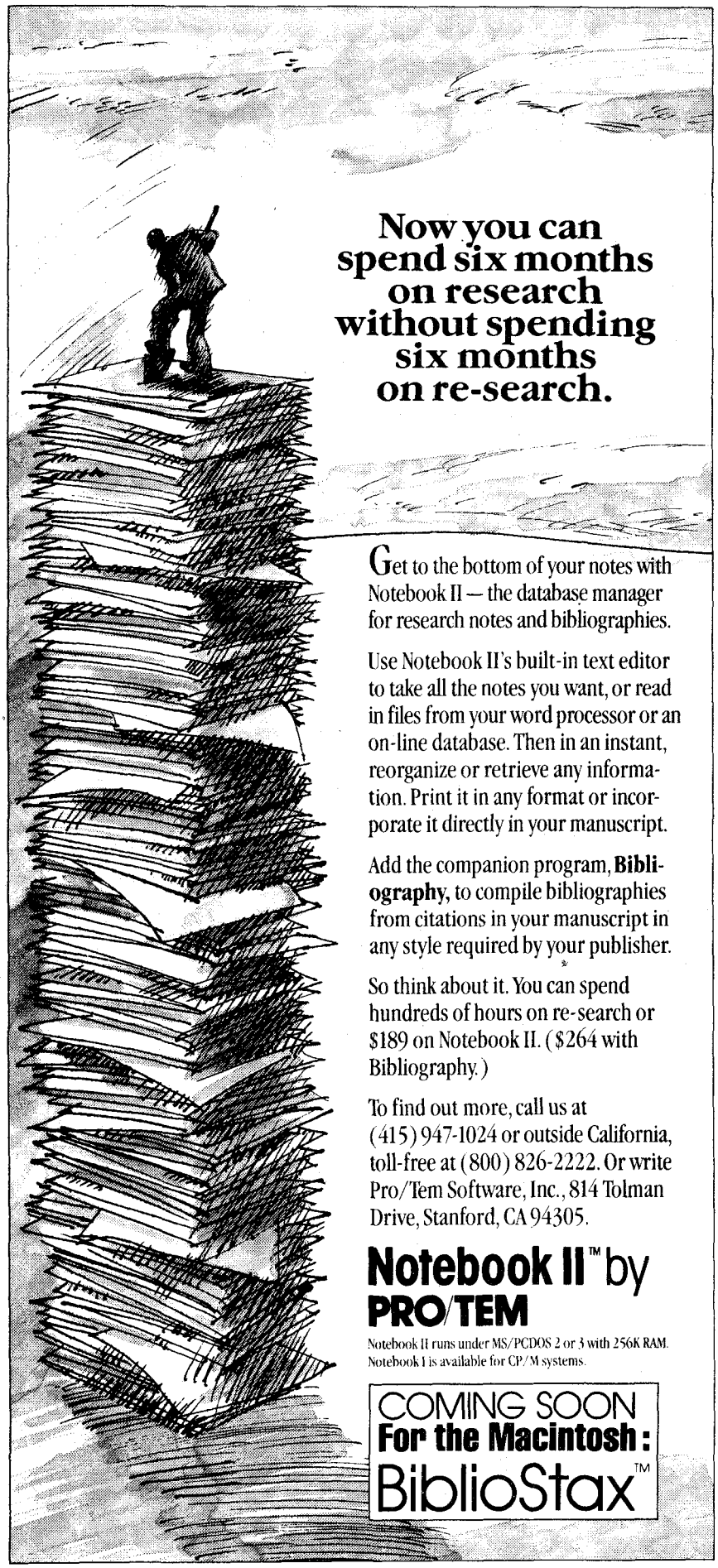
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field is so new that it does not yet even have an agreed-upon name) is already being hailed as the third great scientific revolution of the twentieth century, after relativity and quantum mechanics.

Time will tell whether such optimism is justified. For the present, it may be said that the new science certainly appears sufficiently promising to warrant the attention not only of scientists but of the lay public as well, and that its explication therefore deserves the effort of interpreters able to discuss it intelligently in nontechnical terms. Fortunately, reliable introductions to complexity science are beginning to appear. An able overture was sounded last year with the publication of the estimable *Chaos: Making a New Science*, by science writer James Gleick of *The New York Times*. That effort has now been joined by the equally worthy new book *The Dreams of Reason: The Computer and the Rise of the Science of Complexity*, more personal and reflective but just as substantive, by Heinz Pagels.

Pagels, who died in a mountaineering accident on Pyramid Peak, Colorado, July 24 at the age of 49, was a physicist who served as executive director of the New York Academy of Sciences. His flair for writing readable, low-distortion popularizations of physics is known to readers of his earlier books *The Cosmic Code* and *Perfect Symmetry*. His intellectual breadth was evidenced by such enterprises as his sponsorship of a seminar in which a group of Western scientists discussed physics and cosmology with the Dalai Lama. That high-spirited affair concluded happily when Pagels, curious about the Tibetan doctrine of reincarnation, asked whether, if scientists could one day build a computer so intelligent that it could meaningfully discuss philosophy, "you, Your Holiness, [would] say that this artificial intelligence was a reincarnate being?" As Pagels tells the story, the Dalai Lama laughed, then "pointed to the space in front of his chair (which was empty) and said, 'There, there! When you have such a machine put it *there* before me, then we will have this discussion again!' In other words, put up or shut up."

I must confess that when I started reading *The Dreams of Reason*—which begins with a personal "Introductory Memoir" in which Pagels describes his youthful philosophizing, his experiments with LSD and his sloshings about in the hot springs of Big Sur in the 1960s—I

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feared that it was going to be a "night thoughts" collection, long on soulful introspection and short on facts. Instead, it turned out to be an erudite, succinct account of some highly sophisticated and imaginative science, told in the generous voice of a friend who is trying very hard to help you understand something vitally important that he is charitable enough to believe you capable of understanding. Illuminating and engrossing and bristling with fresh ideas, it left me feeling both that I wanted to learn a lot more about complexity science and that I just might be able to do so.

One of the many intriguing ideas that Pagels addresses in this, his last book, is that certain classes of complex systems may be modeled mathematically and their future behavior to some degree predicted, even if their particulars seem totally different: A single set of equations might prove equally useful at predicting the flight patterns of starlings and the migrations of the Great Red Spot on Jupiter. For example, when a "nonlinear" system of the kind studied by the American meteorologist Edward N. Lorenz is modeled topologically, in a hyperdimensional abstract space, it turns out to contain what are called "strange attractors"—basins of low energy that migrate through the system, threatening to gobble up parts of it and drain them of their coherency. The phenomenological result of the strange attractors' meddling might take quite different forms, depending on the specifics of the system in question—a stock market crash, say, or a marital spat, or the mass extinction of a species—yet the equations suggest that the underlying dynamics are very similar, perhaps identical. If, for instance, we take into account that the wanderings of strange attractors are highly sensitive to initial conditions, we might begin to understand how it is that a kingdom can be lost for the want of a horseshoe nail or the failure of a computer chip can bring the world to the brink of nuclear war. The point is that predictions of catastrophes, and of many less dramatic but equally important occurrences, could be made for a wide range of systems regardless of their particulars. A Martian mathematician who knew nothing of human affairs could nevertheless predict the future of the American economy. Conceivably, so might a government economist.

Contemplating such marvels, Pagels waxes optimistic about the potential of complexity science. "A new salient of knowledge is being created," he writes, "and our generation is privileged to see it unfold. Like all great changes throughout the course of human history, it provides challenge, opportunity, hope, and danger. We stand on the threshold of the human mastery of complexity—an agenda for science that may show us, for the first time, who and what we truly are." But he steers clear of the semiautomatic championing of novelty found in so much popular science writing. He is respectful but not worshipful of computers: "Information tends to drive out knowledge. . . . What we want is knowledge, but what we often get is information." He views mathematics more as a set of tools than as a window into a Platonic absolute: "Perhaps mathematics, as we understand it as a universal science, is actually rather particular, a consequence of our particular brain structure and its particular evolution on our planet."

Such ethical implications as Pagels draws from complexity science are modestly framed. "Some aspects of our moral behavior—behavior that either reflects or constitutes our moral values—seem extremely complex, but conceivably they arise from simple elements that can be understood," he writes. "While science cannot judge, it can help us understand." Yet I sometimes wonder whether the scientific mastery of complex systems might harbor greater promise for the metaphysics of morals than Pagels suggests. In the far, mist-shrouded peaks of this emerging science one can glimpse a prospect from which some of the most consequential transformations of human affairs, from wars and epidemics to the breaking of the bonds that secure friends and families, might be viewed as predictable aspects of the dynamics of complex systems to which we all belong. Were this the case, previously value-laden concerns like war and crime and social injustice might be examined empirically, in terms unfreighted by blame or blandishment. Should that come to pass, it seems to me that science will have made the greatest ethical contribution to have illuminated our benighted world since the days when Laotse and Jesus walked the earth.

If these thoughts go beyond Pagels's, I take refuge in the excuse that his book acts as a springboard, encouraging the reader to venture into personal speculations that may not always be as disci-

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plined as were that good physicist's own. I could, I suppose, find grounds on which to criticize the book. The "philosophy of science" sections sometimes seem a bit confused—which is to say that they are confused in a different way than is my own philosophy of science. So many different ideas are investigated that their interrelationship is not always made entirely clear. But if it is sometimes jumbled, so is its subject, for this is a young and furiously growing endeavor and a long way, one hopes, from being frozen in amber.

The Dreams of Reason is, as the mathematicians say about the weather, "unsimulatable"; it stands as its own most efficient analogue, and as an apt monument to Heinz Pagels's warmth and vitality and extraordinary intellectual curiosity. To read it is to nourish that hope for the efficacy of rational thought and ethical values without which our futures are lost. □

The Mean Machine?

ROBERT PATTISON

Bryan Tucker is such stuff as Tipper Gore's dreams are made of. Earlier this year, as Ms. Gore was inveighing against television's "graphic violence" on the Op-Ed page of *The New York Times*, the tabloid *Weekly World News* was reporting that 12-year-old Bryan of Hollywood, Florida, had set himself ablaze while imitating his favorite Mötley Crüe video. "He thought it was fantasy and nothing would happen," explained the local fire inspector.

Bryan's hallucinations confirm what most Americans consider gospel: that television violence makes viewers violent. In a survey of *Glamour* readers, 88 percent of the respondents thought that violence on TV encourages aggression in children. In the Senate, Paul Simon is the champion of a perennial bill to give the entertainment industry an exemption from the antitrust laws. Under his legislation, media chieftains could combine to suppress televised mayhem. His bill is endorsed by the national Parent-Teachers' Association, the American Association of Pediatrics and the American Psychiatric Association.

Meanwhile, social scientists have built a thriving industry around televised violence. Senator Simon, an avid student of this vast literature, can find only one study that disputes the link between televised violence and real-life aggression.

The near universal outrage about TV violence masks larger questions: What is the connection between what we see on television and what we do in life? If there is a connection, is it different from the connection between reading a book or visiting a museum and the rest of our behavior? If so, is this a difference of kind or of degree?

In the popular press and academic journals alike, these complex questions are customarily reduced to the simple equation of televised violence and social malaise. The National Institute of Mental Health's conclusion that there is a "causal relationship between televised violence and later aggressive behavior" is no more than a scholarly endorsement of the *Weekly World News*'s view that Bryan Tucker was the victim of television's reality warp. The scholarly studies that substantiate this charge purport to tell us something fundamental and disturbing about television and behavior. Since 98 percent of American homes have TV sets, each of which is turned on an average of six hours a day, these claims matter, and the studies that make them ought to withstand the closest scrutiny of their methods, their premises and their motives. They ought to, but they don't.

Twenty children sit in a classroom. A stranger appears and announces, "We are going to ask you to do a number of things for us today. These things are not tests. We just want to know how you feel about some things." Then the children respond on a sheet of paper to questions like, "Are your daydreams about things and people that could never really happen, like monsters or fairies or men from outer space?"

Of course the stranger is lying. The questions *are* a test. Each answer tests aspects of the child's personality. If the child answers "A lot" to the question about monsters, he is ranked high on the "scary" scale; a "No" to the question, "Did you ever have a whole special pretend world with lots of people or animals?" earns a low score on the "intellectual" scale.

Even children—perhaps especially chil-

Robert Pattison is the author of The Triumph of Vulgarity *(Oxford University Press).*

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dren—can see through these attempts at incrimination, and the results that emerge from such a survey can never be more accurate than the reductive view of human nature on which they are built.

Studies of TV's influence on behavior are equally defective in their premises. They begin with the assumption that the medium makes the world a mean place and, not surprisingly, they end with the conclusion that the world is a mean place because of television. Reputations have been built on this tautology. A leading group in communication studies—George Gerbner, Larry Gross and Nancy Signorelli of the Annenberg School of Communications at the University of Pennsylvania—support their scientific conclusions about the baleful influence of television by reference to a "Violence Profile" and a "Mean World Index," both their own inventions. The first of these simply quantifies televised mayhem on the major networks' prime-time programs. It even provides a killer:killed ratio. The second is a running survey of American dyspepsia. Taken together, the Violence Profile and the Mean World Index demonstrate that the number of corpses on *Miami Vice* is positively correlated with the number of citizens who believe that "most people are just looking out for themselves." This kind of research sets out looking for meanness and violence and not surprisingly, it finds them. Since the conclusions of such studies are inherent in their premises, the results are worthless.

Media students pay lip service to television's potential for good, but their chief delight lies in demonstrating its evil. They have yet to devise a "Kindness Profile" to count the number of hugs exchanged on *The Cosby Show* or a "Clean World Index" to measure the number of citizens who believe in the fundamental decency of the human race. The correlation of a Kindness Profile and a Clean World Index might well indicate that television has ushered in a new age of altruism, but we are never likely to hear about it from the social scientists, who begin their inquiries with two unwarranted assumptions: that television does influence behavior, and that its influence is generally bad.

On close examination, studies of television are not intended to demonstrate causal connections between media and behavior. These connections are assumed from the start. Their aim is political, as a moment's glance at Saturday night prime-time TV and its critics will demonstrate.

Take, for instance, a certain nationally televised miniseries shown this spring, which featured a dissolute drug lord who smothered an old lady, suffocated a priest, hanged an innocent nurse and liquidated one of his own associates, pumping two extra slugs into his victim's lifeless chest for good measure. This series was not squeamish in displaying its corpses, and viewers were also treated to incidents of arson, adultery, homosexual intrigue and dope-dealing, as well as a shot of a wheelchair-bound invalid hurtling to his death from the top of a rocky precipice. The hero of this lurid saga was, moreover, a rigid and inflexible cop whose emotional impotence was more chilling than the atmosphere of decadence in which he moved.

This is the kind of fare that ought to send the Mean World Index rocketing into hyperspace. But no social scientist will include this miniseries in his Violence Profile, because its hero is righteous Inspector Dalgliesh of P.D. James's *The Black Tower*, a recent offering from Public Broadcasting's *Mystery!*, a series with very strong appeal among PBS's upscale audience.

Nice people watch PBS, and by definition nice people do not confuse television with reality. It's the programs that nice people do not watch on Saturday night—the kind of programs that run opposite *Mystery!* on the commercial networks—that critics denounce for their aggression and moral bankruptcy. According to the Arbitron overnight ratings, while *The Black Tower* was taking a 5 percent share of all sets switched on in the New York market, CBS's *Tour of Duty*, NBC's *Hunter*, ABC's *Ohara* and the Fox network's *Dirty Dozen* took the bulk of the Saturday night audience, a 51 percent share among them. On *Tour of Duty*, G.I. twins from California battled each other and the North Vietnamese to make the world safe for democracy. On NBC, Hunter investigated the suspicious defenestration of a beautiful mythomaniac and exculpated a falsely accused Las Vegas lounge lizard. On ABC, detective Ohara discovered that the escaped criminal he was trailing was in fact the innocent victim of a corrupt policeman, and by 10 o'clock the felonious cop was behind bars. Meanwhile, Fox's Dirty Dozen collaborated with a tribe of middle-European gypsies to exterminate a German general.

The commercial shows featured much brandishing of weaponry and bursts of gunfire, eventuating in the death of various Fascists and other uniformed ban-

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dits, but even the briefest summary of these plots cannot conceal the irreverent and carefully crafted silliness with which their violence is presented. The streak of good-natured low comedy that runs through prime-time aggression, reaching its acme in Sonny Crockett's pet alligator, Elvis, makes the scientific conception of these shows as reservoirs of meanness seem an almost sublime compliment.

Compare this genial confection of armed absurdities with the moral poverty offered up by PBS. Strictly in terms of casualties, the PBS miniseries outdid the commercial programs; nor can it claim an exemption from censure on the grounds of superior moral or aesthetic values, unless a chorus of English accents automatically elevates any television show beyond good and evil. All the characters in *The Black Tower* were cynical, malevolent or decrepit, with the exception of the villain, whose crime seems to have been that he liked to have a good time, apparently an unforgivable sin in P.D. James's Britain. At least viewers of the commercial networks would have seen valor in action or justice vindicated.

According to the prevailing standards, the wholesale slaughter of British eccentrics cannot qualify as violence, because no matter how perverse the action on *Mystery!* may be, no one believes that it is responsible for the subsequent behavior of its viewers. If televised versions of P.D. James's stories account for aggressive behavior in the aisles of Bloomingdale's, the social scientists have not noticed. In the world of media studies, it's assumed there is no relationship between the behavior of nice people and their television viewing habits. Such a relation only obtains between mass audiences and mass programming.

What the critics really object to in TV programming is not its violence but its popularity. Arguments about TV violence are usually veiled attacks on the commercialism of the entertainment industry. The media scholars pursue traditional political objectives under the guise of high-tech scholarship. And this explains why so many media studies are about the dire effects of television on children. Media studies use children as a metaphor for the rest of us. The idea is that the mind of the mass audience is essentially a child's mind: immature, irrational and impressionable.

When its claims to scientific objectivity have been exposed, the greater part of media research emerges as a political lobby campaigning on the platform that ordinary people are unfit to make sensible moral and aesthetic judgments, which ought to be left to their intellectual betters. Small wonder that media scholars display such unanimity of opinion and that senators concur so readily in their conclusions. The premise of the whole enterprise is that the power of the tube would best be wielded by academics and legislators. This may or may not be correct political theory; it is fatal to learning anything objective about television.

But the monumental fatuity of media studies unintentionally establishes a few truths. First, it demonstrates that most television criticism is only incidentally about television at all. It's really about the social or moral content of what appears on television. The critics hate cop shows because they reflect society's violence, sitcoms because they reflect society's frivolity and game shows because they reflect society's materialism. For the media critics, TV is a ubiquitous lens that magnifies every social evil. Most television scholarship is no more about television than bacteriology is about microscopes. They're both about what lies on the other side of the lens.

Second, these media studies point out the awesome difficulty of saying anything that is uniquely true of television and at the same time universal in application. "Television promotes violence." Is that true only of television? Couldn't the same statement be made about books or movies, and for the same reasons? Does television promote violence everywhere? In Mongolia just as much as in Florida? Is there any statement about television that could not be dismantled in much the same way? The question "What does television do to us?" has yet to be asked properly, much less answered intelligently. Which makes it one of the best questions around. □

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FILMS.

STUART KLAWANS

Saved!

In the year 373, the Emperors Valens and Valentinian ordered the destruction of all books of magic in their domains. Since the term "magic" was broadly construed, much of the learning and literature of the Roman Empire went up in flames. No one can know what was lost to posterity then, or say what treasures the Alexandrian library might have held. Book-burnings in our own day have been less devastating in their results—Gutenberg made it harder to extirpate texts—but we still look on such events with proper revulsion, even though the damage may be more symbolic than real. The book, we feel, is the body of our history and thought.

Unfortunately, we lack a similar respect for the medium that has embodied our own century's history. Motion pictures are industrial products—technologically complex, economically profitable, popular beyond the dreams of Dickens himself—so we never think of them with the reverence we afford books, and rarely imagine that they could be endangered. Yet more than half of the films made before 1950 have vanished. In fact, *every* film from that period will inevitably self-destruct unless someone takes the trouble to save it.

During the movies' first half-century, all films were made on a nitrate-based stock, which yielded beautiful, shimmering images. The stock also reacted chemically with air, producing nitric acid. In other words, the films ate themselves. It wasn't until the late 1940s that researchers invented the stable, triacetate stock that is now universally in use; and by then, much of the damage had been done. Thousands of films had been lost: features, short subjects, newsreels, actualities footage, an Alexandrian library's worth of historical documents and works of the imagination. Today, almost forty years after the invention of safety stock, the situation is not much better. While films literally turn to dust, the world's archives struggle to come up with the money to rescue what they can. The simplest preservation job, transferring a black-and-white feature from nitrate to safety stock, costs $10,000 to $12,000. If the film has to be restored in

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some way—pieced together, perhaps, from various faulty prints—the cost is much higher. And if a color film is being preserved, the base cost rises by a factor of five. In this context, the recent uproar over colorization seems a mere sideshow.

It would be easy to cite statistics and examples to make a case for film preservation; but the best arguments are the films themselves. I would therefore urge readers who happen to be in New York City to visit the Museum of Modern Art, where a remarkable exhibition of preserved films is on view through September 9. *Saved! A Decade of Preservation* pays tribute to the work of the U.C.L.A. Film and Television Archive through screenings of some of its notable successes. You couldn't ask for a more delightful or convincing introduction to the cause.

There is, for example, a gleaming new print of John Ford's *She Wore a Yellow Ribbon*. When it was released in 1949, the film won an Academy Award for its Technicolor cinematography. It was a popular success and has since been accepted as a classic. And for almost thirty years, audiences have seen the picture only in badly faded, 16mm prints. That's like hearing Beethoven's Seventh through a tin can at the end of a string. When the U.C.L.A. Archive set out to save the film, the conservators found no adequate prints in circulation. They located only one good, 35mm print—in John Wayne's private collection—and used that to check the accuracy of the colors, as they restored the film from the original Technicolor negatives. If you didn't see *She Wore a Yellow Ribbon* during its first release, you haven't been able to see it till now.

One of the obvious goals of preservation is to save films of clear historical importance, such as a John Ford classic, or Rouben Mamoulian's 1935 *Becky Sharp*, the first feature shot in full Technicolor. Another goal is to save films that nobody thinks are important at all. Tastes change in film—as in all things, only rather more quickly. In the MoMA exhibition, for example, you will find pictures directed by Robert Siodmak and Edgar G. Ulmer that we would call *films noirs*, examples of the genre that has been called the greatest achievement of American filmmaking. But as Robert Rosen, director of the U.C.L.A. Archive, points out, for a long time nobody called such pictures *films noirs*. They were known as urban paranoia movies or gangster pictures, and most people who took film seriously thought them beneath contempt. "People ask, 'Why don't you pick the few great classics and save just those movies?'" Rosen asks. "The answer is, we can't decide for people in the future which films will be worth saving."

Film is a documentary medium as much as a narrative one, and to show the importance of preservation in this regard, the MoMA series will include a program of saved footage from Hearst Metrotone Newsreels of 1919 to 1940, including outtakes that are sometimes more revealing than the finished product. Newsreels will also be shown before some of the features, in the company of other short subjects: Max Fleischer cartoons featuring Betty Boop, or *Popular Science* films shot in retina-boggling Magnacolor.

Those interested in backstage footage will want to catch the Group Theater screen tests from 1939 (with Luther Adler, Elia Kazan, Morris Carnovsky and others), as well as the program *Behind the Scenes in Hollywood* (including an aged and disaffected D.W. Griffith presenting an Academy Award to a young and giggly Bette Davis). For fans of cinematic oddity, there are examples of Laurel and Hardy featurettes shot in Spanish. In the early days of sound, before dubbing was invented, films would sometimes be shot two or three times over. The actors, having done a scene in English, would repeat it in Spanish or French, reciting lines that were written for them phonetically. Imagine, if you will—or better still, see for yourself—Stan Laurel declaring, "High, corrumba!"

"When audiences fall in love with the image on the screen," Rosen says, "they know in their guts the tragedy of what might have been lost." In this sense, the series at MoMA is less a celebration of the U.C.L.A. Archive's achievement than a plea for support for the effort that still must be made. U.C.L.A. alone holds 13 million feet of endangered nitrate feature films, as well as 14 million feet of nitrate newsreels; and U.C.L.A. is only one of more than seventy members of the International Federation of Film Archives. There is great cooperation among the archives, to make sure that scarce funds aren't wasted by duplicating efforts. In the United States, for example, U.C.L.A. shares the responsibility for saving American film with the MoMA archive, the Library of Congress, the International Museum of

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Photography at George Eastman House and others. Nevertheless, the task is daunting. Adrienne Mancia, the MoMA curator who selected the films in this exhibition, began her introduction to a recent showing with congratulations to the U.C.L.A. archivists for their success. Then she thought better of it and added, "Well, given what's already been lost, they can't *succeed*. They can do their best to save what's left, along with the rest of us."

Complete schedules for *Saved!* are available at the Museum of Modern Art. Count on seeing me there on August 28 or 30, when they're showing the 1941 Jean Arthur comedy *The Devil and Miss Jones*, with a screenplay by Norman Krasna of Aristotelian clarity. I would as soon have lost the *Poetics* as that picture. □

RAIN FOREST

No lianas, no
Chattering rufous monkeys, no
bird cries even, under
the canopy of firs.
Clouds you can't see
filter the shadows.
The air is dense
with intricate
respiration: sacs and
pores, the transaction
of gasses in half-light.
Rain a scrim.

Everything falls,
dripping a blurred
hush. Innumerable
whispers in the sodden
duff: mosses, flakes
of bark, black twigs soft
as noodles. A poor soil
where life does its work.
So the dropped limb slowly
fills with its own sawdust,
a cracked urn sinking
in fungal growth.

Curds, clumps, fleshy
congealed waves—they
feed on rot. If you
touched them, they would
crumble. If you knelt down
or stumbled on a damp root,
you would be covered,
the world glazed and
layered: debris, and ferns,
and high up in the limbs still
standing, flowering vines
dangling their speechless heads.

Don Bogen

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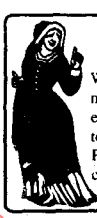

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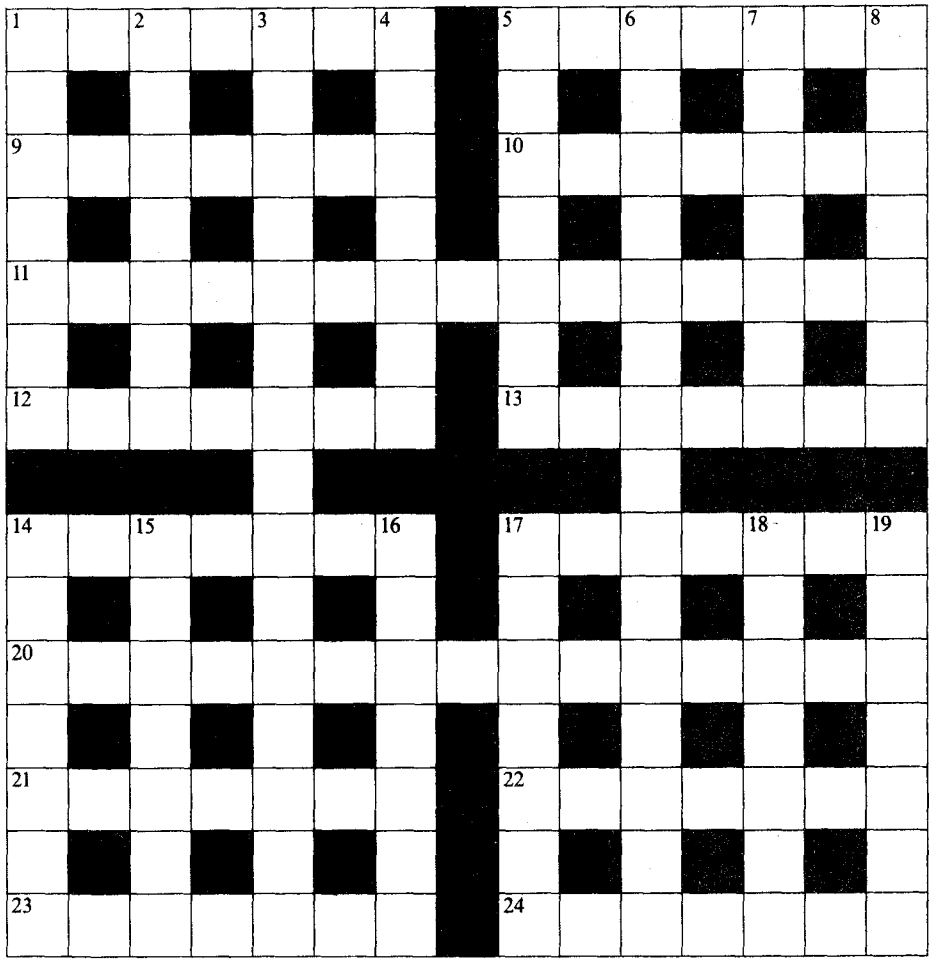
SOLUTION TO PUZZLE NO. 2206

G	E	T	O	U	T	O	F		T	H	E	W	A	Y
E		H		N		V		A		A		A		E
R	U	R	A	L		E	S	C	A	P	A	D	E	S
M		O		A		R		R		P		E		A
A	N	T	A	C	I	D		O	M	I	C	R	O	N
N		T		E		U		S		E				D
	P	L	E	D	G	E		S	A	R	A	C	E	N
S		E										A		O
H	A	D	R	I	A	N		A	M	O	U	R	S	
E				M		U		N		N		P		S
P	A	R	A	P	E	T		D	I	S	S	E	N	T
H		O		A		A		O		H		T		A
E	S	P	E	R	A	N	T	O		O	R	B	I	T
R		E		T		T		W		R		A		U
D	E	S	I	S	T		I	N	V	E	I	G	L	E

X-523

Crossword Puzzle No. 2207

FRANK W. LEWIS



ACROSS

1 Present and accounted for! (As a human attribute is found.) (2,5)
5 Vulgar and rude, uncle's south of this when less detached. (7)
9 Work with little Virginia, found in one associated with a lonesome pine. (7)
10 This plane is designed in somewhat of a pet, perhaps. (7)
11 One might with a good camera and a telescopic lens give patient consideration to the matter. (4,3,4,4)
12 No conclusion can be reached with such things. (7)
13 Time for a Cowardly Englishman to appear? (7)
14 Those who work at the grocery store might not have time to catch the game. (7)
17 This way one takes for granted that rough seas are about the total of the answer. (7)
20 It might be located on the bench, on either side—but is called for sometimes by those who flag. (7,8)
21 Take something away from the heart of a tiger, as you might say, and one might take a tumble. (7)
22 Descriptive of those who want more. (7)
23 With the head turned, a type of explosion would become less apparent. (7)
24 A small low island employs Indian ponies here. (7)

DOWN

1 and 14 down Sign at the drinking establishment; put on weight, as well. (4,3,7)
2 Need something in bed—like your shoes could be? (7)
3 Would sorting out his name be a vain attempt, though he has an extremely bad association? (4,3,8)
4 Does what the editor used to look at take a lot of nerve? Yes, in a way! (7)
5 Not like the well-shaved gentlemen in Jack's house—though the sun breaks out on the cape, perhaps. (7)
6 What shifty types backstage might be responsible for—and what some holidayers seek. (6,2,7)
7 Due, if in trouble with the early U.S., as it were. (7)
8 Such measures are seldom recommended when there is a bad flaw in what the stock might get. (7)
14 See 1 down
15 Fuel has a trick, one hears, relating to the stomach. (7)
16 You might be one after a good workout, if you had one on. (7)
17 Sunny, in a sense, but the first part of the play could be considered almost nice. (7)
18 Not exactly the same pig—you might say it's for the birds. (7)
19 Clasp her especially carefully—there are worlds, as they say, to see. (7)

SEE LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION AT LEFT

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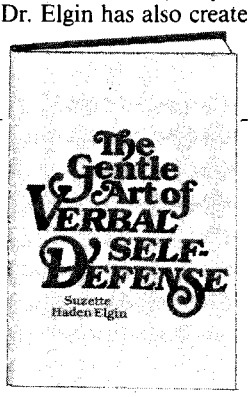
About the Author

Psycholinguist Suzette Haden Elgin has presented her innovative self-defense principles in a variety of formats. She has given workshops and seminars all over the U.S., including verbal self-defense sessions for doctors, lawyers, and other professionals. Dr. Elgin has also created a self-defense tape and a training manual for people who teach her self-defense techniques.



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